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# STUDIES OF THE SOUL

BY

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# STUDIES OF THE SOUL.



## I.

### On Growing a Soul.

IN the very first glimpses we get, in history's earliest dawn, of articulate speaking man, we find him pondering precisely the questions which to-day agitate him in his central depth. He asked then as he is asking now, What is the soul, whence came it, what does it stand for? And nothing is more remarkable than the practical unanimity of the world's answer to this world-question. Looked at historically, modern materialism is a mere insignificant eddy on the surface of an overwhelming current of contrary opinion. India answers back to ancient Egypt, and the deepest thought of Europe to the teaching of Galilee, with a result which may be summed up in one formula—the world is the expression of Spirit.

and exists for the further development of it. In other words, the world exists in order to grow souls. No other theory fits the facts or satisfies the human conscience. Apart from this outlook, life's sufferings and failures would lead us to the feeling expressed in the picture which Lowell saw in Belgium, where an angel arrests the arm of the Almighty, put forth for the creative act: "If about to make such a world," the canvas seems to say, "stay Thine hand!"

But when we speak of growing a soul, we must define with a little more closeness what we mean. And to do so we pass by a multitude of questions on this subject with which the earlier philosophers busied themselves. Augustine, be it said, in his "*De Animâ*," is admirable reading here, not only for his own profound suggestions, but for the conspectus he gives of the opinions of the early world. Has the world itself a soul; is the soul of man a direct emanation from God, or does one soul generate another; is the soul of the same essence as the Deity, or something inferior; is

it, as the Platonists aver, placed in a body in this world as a punishment for sins committed in another sphere? On these, and a multitude of similar points, the old thinkers have said about as much as there is to be said, and after all leave the question very much where it was.

But the expressions "the world-soul" and "the human soul" open up some questions of a different order from those propounded by the Platonist, and which are worthy of all our attention. We may, for instance, affirm—and in doing so we are linking modern science and the historical consciousness with the very earliest thinking—that the world, in the sense of collective humanity, is actually growing a soul. Of the immense process of the ages this is the chief and fore-ordained result. What lies behind and explains that process is a question on which the latest European idealism and the oldest Hindu philosophy are significantly at one. When Schelling declares that the external world is an expression of the same life that is writ in our consciousness, that the Universal

Spirit comes to the knowledge of itself in man ; that the outer world is God's thought shown to our eyes, while the inner world is God's thought become conscious of itself ; he is simply echoing what had been uttered thousands of years before on the banks of the Ganges, where the relation of man to nature, and of the Eternal Spirit to both were put into the great formula, "*thou art that.*"

We are on different ground when, from the metaphysics of the world-soul we come to its natural history. That history has been epitomised in the saying of another German thinker: "God sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal, and wakes in the man." The awakening has been a slow process. To trace the movement towards conscious thought through the ages of geologic time, through the faint suggestions of it in the vegetable and lowest animal life, through the foreshadowings of reason and of ethics in the prehuman races ; to track its upward way into the human form itself as it showed on this planet through the dim, forgotten paleolithic and neolithic eras, is to pass



through abysses of duration beyond the power of arithmetic to compute. All we know is, and truly this is a marvellous thing, that as soon as we meet man in the earliest dawn of history we find him in full possession of his soul. Says Boscawen, speaking of the Egyptian Book of the Dead and of the Chaldæan tablets: "Six thousand years ago man, in Egypt and Chaldæa, stands before us pure in his tastes, lofty in his ideals, and, above all, keenly conscious of the relationship which existed between himself and his God. . . . It is no dread, but the grateful love of a child to his father, of friend to friend, that meets us in the oldest books of the world." The common world-consciousness, which has reached this height when it is first introduced to us, has been growing ever since. Mighty revelations have been vouchsafed it; stupendous experiences of trial and suffering have wrought upon it; continuously have its horizons widened; and these processes are still going on. To what height of evolution this world-soul will reach; whether, as Drummond held, life on this planet will go no higher than

its present human expression; or whether, as Nietzsche taught, the present consciousness of the actual man is only a preparation for that of "the over man" yet to come, it is not for us here to discuss.

For, after all, our main business in this planet is to study, not so much the growing of the world-soul, as the growing of our own. Socrates was describing the greatest work a man could give himself to when, in his *Apology*, he declared: "For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons, or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul." It needs to be as seriously and as categorically taught to the inhabitants of these islands to-day as it was to the Athenians in the time of Socrates, that, apart from any questions of Church dogma or of future life, no human pursuit, no hunt after wealth, fame, or pleasure is comparable in interest or in value with the growing of a soul.

By the soul here we mean something deeper than the machine that ticks in the brain, that

calculates and memorises, that learns the tricks in trade or diplomacy, and cleverly practises them. A developed man finds in him a streak of something beneath that, a something that relates him to the infinite, which feels and suffers, which wills, and is the seat of moral judgment. Everybody recognises this as part of himself, but few indeed realise what may be made of it. To a generation which does not read the world's deepest books it is difficult to give an idea of what the human soul has really grown to in those who have given it a chance. The literature of this subject is the lives of the great saints, and amongst them perhaps especially the great mystics. Here we learn the possibilities of a grown-up soul; the annihilation in it of the lower desires, and the full set of its determination upon the highest things; its power of vision, by which it has an apprehension of God which nothing can shake, and a sense of the spiritual world that makes it grandly indifferent to the conditions of the earthly lot; its power of influence, such that through commonest words and acts thrill mys-

terious forces that shake and inspire the hearts of men; and its power of enjoyment, drawn from sources which the world cannot dry up, and which reaches at times an intensity that transcends the limits of expression. Unless the world's best men and women have been its greatest liars, these experiences have, in differing degrees, been common to them all.

It is impossible for us here to particularise as to the method by which these results have been obtained. Our readers probably know the main lines of it as well as we do. What we want to emphasize is that the route is open to us all. We can each grow a soul if we are willing to pay the price. Assuredly it is worth it, for this is really the one and the only victorious life. Failure is, in the long run, written on every other, and by whatever standard a man judges. One could cite a thousand facts in proof, but this one should be enough—the growth of the soul is the one pursuit which makes life, to its very last day, full of interest. He who follows it knows nothing of the despair of Anacreon in his old age, or of the wail of Mimmernus over



his lost youth; "when once the appointed time of youth is past it is better to die forthwith than to live." It can survive strength, health, fortune, friends, for by a Divine alchemy it can turn the loss of them all into the aliment of its ever-growing power.

The world is full to-day of the cry of the educationist. It is well to remember that nothing we can teach is comparable in its importance to this. To show to our children that they are on this planet to grow their own soul and the world's soul; that this is the solution of the world's riddle; that the explanation of what sorrow and loss may await them is all found here; and not only to teach this, but by the conditions in which we rear them, to make the learning of it both natural and universally possible, will be to enrich the coming generations infinitely more than by aught else with which our wealth or our love can endow them.

## II.

### The Soul's Receptiveness.

A MAN who, from the standpoint of modern research, tries to form for himself some coherent idea of religion, is conscious of a curious dissatisfaction when he turns to the creeds and formularies which profess to give an account of it. What they contain is, he finds, in parts surprising enough, but his chief surprise is at what they leave out. The first thing which his mental habit teaches him to ask for in such a study is a biology of the spiritual life which shall give a scientific account of its phenomena. He sees himself surrounded by facts and forces belonging to this realm, and he inquires for the laws of them. But for knowledge of this sort he searches the formularies in vain. The theologians have been busy in an entirely different field. He must make his own way here as best he can. An illustration of his difficulty is suggested by the

title we have chosen for this chapter. Studying religion at the beginning, as he finds it in himself and his neighbour, one of the first things he runs up against is a great law of receptivity. The doctrinal authorities have, it is true, in their own way something to say on this subject, but the topic is grievously in want of resetting. Let us look here a little at how the facts stand.

Receptivity is a branch of the wider law of relativity. What things are in themselves is nothing. It is what they are in relation to us that counts. We know nothing of substance except in its relations. Hydrogen is a new thing when it touches oxygen. Light as it falls upon the hand or the forehead brings no revelation of itself. It is when it touches the human retina that its wide world of possibilities is opened. A Paderewski drops his fingers upon a block of wood and there is no response. The same touch on the keys of a piano thrills the air with melody. In all these spheres the same thing has happened. It is the wedding of an outside impact to an inner power of response.

When we turn more definitely to human life we realise how its development from stage to stage is throughout a development of its power of response. The universe knocks at our door and enters in proportion as we open it. Light, electricity, form, colour, sound have been here from the beginning, waiting for recognition. Through measureless ages and from lowliest origins human life has been working up to a perception of these things, until now the mind, simply by its power to receive, has become as it were a universe in itself. Man creates none of these forces, invents none of these laws. They were there before he came. But by appropriating the forces and conforming to the laws he becomes mighty with their might, and beautiful with their beauty. There appears absolutely no limit to this process. So far as one can see it will go on until the whole stupendous total of cosmic force will be open to our disposal.

This is the human receptivity and its prospect on one side. The question now comes whether similar affirmations may be made

about the side of it which we term the spiritual. When we say that the forces we know as light or heat are constant and their law unchanging, may we speak in similar terms of a light, vibrating through a subtler ether, by which the mind sees truth, and of an inner warmth which kindles the soul to love? Is there here also a constant and limitless supply available; are the laws here ascertainable; and may the soul grow indefinitely by their appropriation?

The moment we ask the question we find ourselves thrown back upon what seems a fundamental difference. The Cosmic forces may be conceived of as impersonal. Spiritual force, on the other hand, imperatively demands a person. It only exists as an expression and outflow of personality. We may use the warmth of fire or the speed of electricity without connecting them in our minds with character or will. But the soul's affections can only be stirred by character. Magnetism cannot create love. It takes a soul to touch a soul. To some minds the direct sense of personality in the spiritual world, as compared with what they

think they find in the natural world, makes it impossible to argue from one to the other. In this we are dealing, they say, with matter and force; in that, with a personal God. The two spheres cannot be treated as the same. But science and philosophy in their latest forms are both making it increasingly difficult to hold this view. Both are asking whether Cosmic force, in the final analysis, is not as clear an expression of will as is spiritual love. A coherent view of the universe demands conscious spirit as much behind gravitation as behind affection. Natural laws are beginning to be realised as God's habits in that sphere. Their permanence means the permanence of His character. And His law of love may be spoken of in the same terms as His laws of light or heat, because they are both the efflux of the same nature.

But if the law of receptivity in the spiritual world is on all fours with what we see in the natural world, some great consequences follow. With this conception in our mind we are delivered at once and for ever from the idea of caprice or favouritism in religion. The same

sun shines upon peasant and upon prince, and each may enjoy the treasure as he may. Spiritual power is simply the capacity to receive. Limitless force lies at each soul's threshold, waiting to make it mighty. Religious genius is simply a superior power of appropriation. The Incarnation was the illustration on the sublimest scale of the spiritual receptiveness of humanity. It was "The Eternal Life in the life of Jesus." And none so clearly as He has witnessed to this truth. In His declaration that He could "of His own self do nothing," He spoke not merely of Himself. He was affirming for all time the law of spiritual power.

In studying the operation of this law amongst men generally we find, in reference to it, one broad line of distinction. There are the many who receive their spiritual force mediately, and the few who may be said to obtain it direct from the Unseen. The mass follow leaders and derive from the human. It is in the seeing power of the prophet and teacher that they behold truth, by his sense of the "world to come" that they are brought under



its power. Ever at their head are the elect souls, dowered with the higher sensitiveness, whose commerce with the Divine is direct and immediate. By whatever name they are called—poet, prophet, philosopher, mystic—they lead men, knowing that they themselves are being led, and by a sure hand. In every creed and by every race this law has been recognised. The Romans were not the most gifted race spiritually, but Cicero's *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit* was a good confession on this point. He realised that the truly great man everywhere was so by the Divine breath that was in him.

From all this emerges the question how we may each develop our spiritual receptiveness. There is none more important, for, so far as one can see, it is for this end that humanity exists, and by this road that it will travel to its highest consummation. The rules are not for us to give. They are already laid down. The Christ law of love, purity, and humility is the way, and there is no other—plain, simple living, the conscientious culture of every power in us, the daily

commerce with the Invisible, association with the nobler souls, the giving up ever of the lower for the higher. Travelling along this road we realise, as years go on, a sense of perpetual enlargement of life. The surface is broadening upon which the Divine breath plays. The inner retina becomes more sensitive to the light, from beyond the stars, that falls upon it. And ever, as we progress, we know that all we have is not a self-creation but rather a reception. We say with Madame Guyon :

I love Thee, Lord, but all the love is Thine,  
For by Thy life I live.

I am as nothing, and rejoice to be  
Emptied, and lost, and swallowed up in Thee.

### III.

## Personality.

THE more one thinks of it the more plainly it appears that in all regions of thought — religious, scientific, artistic, literary—the question of questions, the pivot on which everything turns, is that of personality. What we mean by it, what importance we attach to it, colours our every idea on every subject. And yet, strange to say, there is no other topic in modern thinking about which there seems to be such dire confusion. It is not only that the man in the street, whose philosophical education may be supposed to be meagre, has the vaguest notions on the matter, but the experts and the authorities are at hopeless loggerheads upon it. On the one hand, the school of scientific materialism has persistently belittled personality. It claims, for one thing, to have cleared the universe of an enormous number of its presupposed inhabitants. The fauns, satyrs,

sprites, fairies, guardian angels, and what not, which in the earlier pagan, and, in a different form, in later Christian times, peopled earth and sky, have given place to its reign of natural law. More than that, it has striven to depersonalise, in a sense, humanity itself. It dethrones the individual and puts the whole emphasis of value on the race. Man's immortality, it says, is only a racial immortality. The future life of the individual is simply the life he transmits to his children, and the ideas, the influence and the example he leaves behind him. As to his own separate self, the body and mind stuff of which he is composed is entirely disintegrated at death, to reappear in a thousand different forms of matter, force and sensibility in the endless dance of the worlds. And it adds a finishing touch to this world philosophy by denying that the First Cause of the universe can be in any sense considered as a Person.

It is a curious set-off to this view of things to find another body of non-Christian thinkers taking exactly the opposite attitude to per-

sonality. The extreme Monistic school makes the individual ego everything and the universe outside nothing. The outer world has no other reality than as the unknown cause of cerebral sensation. The calculations of astronomers as to the immensities of space as between star and star are a mere delusion. The one fact at the bottom of them is a series of minute alterations in the grey matter of the astronomer's brain. Each individual ego is its own kingdom, its own law, its own God.

As compared with these extremes on both sides it may be worth while to note the tendency of what we may call the more sober type of both religious and philosophical thinking during recent years. It is safe to say that the greatest result of the newer studies in history and in the phenomena of the human spirit, is the rehabilitation of the doctrine of personality. Those studies have placed it in some new lights, and have deduced from it some new consequences.

First of all, while observation of the material world has led scientists in the direction of law

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and necessity, the study of history and psychology, that is of man himself, has resulted in a more and more emphatic verdict for free will, for personality, for the individual. Carlyle's "Hero Worship" is one of the forms of this verdict. Its doctrine of great men as the real creators of history is one which no number of Buckles, with their food and climate theories of human life, will ever be able to upset. There is, we venture to say, no historical problem which, carefully looked at, does not show the personal equation as its Alpha and Omega. Take for instance the question of Protestantism. How did the world come by it? It may be said that the Protestant doctrines, so far as they were true, existed independently of Luther. They were in the Bible, and in the nature of things. But why, then, did the world pay no heed to them till Luther came? What would have happened if the study of the Bible and of the "nature of things" had had the same effect upon him as, say, upon Erasmus? Without fathoming the question as to what extent the doctrine made

him, or he made the doctrine, it remains that what, at a critical period, went on in the depths of this single personality created Protestantism as we know it. And every other historical evolution in its final analysis tells the same tale.

But the question of personality as related to religious thought takes us a long way further back than Protestantism. It touches the root of religion in its doctrine of God. Negative philosophy has denied personality to the Absolute as being a limitation of it, and consequently a self-contradiction. As a matter of fact there is no philosophy of the Absolute which does not abound in what seem self-contradictions. Sir William Hamilton's illustrations of some of them should be sufficient to make logic, in this dim and awful realm, more modestly distrustful of its powers. What we can be sure about, if there is certainty anywhere, is our own consciousness and its affirmations. What are these? For one thing, consciousness finds in itself an intelligence, a sense of beauty, of righteousness and of love,



of which it argues there must have been a cause. The Cause or Creator of righteousness and love must possess them. But we cannot imagine a possessor of them as not being a person. And so consciousness, fairly interrogated, recognises in the first cause what we include in Personality, though there may be infinitely more in it than that. Victor Hugo puts all this into one happy phrase, "The All would not be the All unless it contained a Personality. That personality is God."

And as personality lies at the beginning of the religious idea, so we meet it at every stage of its evolution. It has been the fashion to mock at the anthropomorphism of the Bible. To say that God made man in His own image, the critics aver, is the reversal of the true order. The proper way of putting it is that it is man that makes God after *his* image. It may turn out that the latter proposition is true, because of the prior truth of the former. The reproach against revealed religion, that it is anthropomorphic, we are beginning to find is no reproach at all. We are discovering that

neither religion nor philosophy can get on without a doctrine of incarnation. Nature through all her processes is seen labouring to produce personality as her final end. And the human personality which is her highest result is found to be, in different stages, a Divine incarnation. Man thinks by means of an eternal reason at the basis of his thought; he approves or condemns himself by an eternal righteousness mysteriously linked to and doubling his own consciousness. And what, in sum, is New Testament Christianity, but the affirmation that this process has had, in the fulness of time, a culmination in the emergence to the light of a complete personality, in whom was exhibited all of God that could be contained and manifested in one human form?

And as in its doctrine of God and of Christ, so in its doctrine of spiritual life, primitive Christianity recognises to the full the supremacy of personality. Its teaching is that the life of the soul is quickened and maintained, not so much by doctrine or sacrament or ceremony, as by the impartation of its Founder's own self.

Christianity is to be propagated by the Spirit of Christ, mediated and handed on by those who have felt its indwelling power. The law is an ultimate one, and is proved by the history of every section of the Church. Whether we read of a Catholic Vianney, of a Presbyterian Baxter, of a Baptist Bunyan, or a Methodist Wesley, their power as persuaders and winners of souls came, not from the particular "ism" they preached, but from the personality, the spirit that was in them, dominated as it was by a higher Personality behind.

The same law is writ large all over literature. The personal is the one thing that interests. Doctrine and dogma, whether theologic, social, or economic, left to its naked self, will moulder on the back shelves of libraries. To be powerful it must be incarnated. Create a living character who holds the doctrines and he will preach them to millions. The Baptist creed of "Pilgrim's Progress" can hardly be called attractive to the mass. As talked by Christian and Hopeful it is the property of the world. Scotch Presbyterianism "in the abstract" is

held commonly by outsiders to be a dry subject. Translated into the life of a Jeanie Deans, or into the characters and opinions of the worthies of Drumtochty, its flavour is appreciated by every palate. Art tells the same story. The pictures that live are those where the colours have been mixed in the artists own life-blood.

Surely the lesson of all this is plain, and it is dead against the materialists. Into whatever region of thought we stray—whether theology, philosophy, history, literature, or art—we find the universe spelling out one word as its final meaning. It exists for persons. The personal life is the ultimate life, the personal interest the ultimate interest. The law which is writ everywhere on this side the grave we may well believe is the law beyond it, and becomes thus the charter of our personal existence after death.

#### IV.

### The Chemistry of Souls.

HUMAN nature is an article in which all the world deals. Every husband and wife, every father and mother of children, every trader, every public instructor is daily handling this, the subtlest, most powerful, and in some aspects most dangerous bundle of forces known on the planet, and taking the risks. What amazes one is the light-heartedness with which people conduct their experiments. Most men before meddling with dynamite would take care to learn something of its properties. They take human nature much more easily. It is a whole magazine of explosives, yet they deal with it often upon the crudest off-hand observations, without in many cases troubling to inquire whether there are any ascertainable laws governing the operation of its materials. Yet it is upon a proper knowledge of them that the whole art of happy and prosperous living depends.

In attempting, as we do here, to turn a side-light from science upon one of these laws of character, **we are, we know,** upon debatable ground. Professor Drummond has been sharply taken to task in some quarters for venturing to speak of natural law in the spiritual world, as though the idea led straight to materialism. He was here, however, in the line of a succession of thinkers from the earliest ages who have traced a correspondency between the two realms of the inner and the outer in the midst of which we stand. And as man and nature are studied more thoroughly the more does the impression grow upon us that an essential Monism is the law of the universe; in other words, that the pulsations of the human spirit are an answer to the pulse which throbs through the outer world. The one illustration of this which we offer here has some large speculative outlooks, as well as practical suggestions for daily life.

Nothing, perhaps, in experimental science so strikes the imagination as the chemical feat of obtaining out of two separate elements a new product which bears no resemblance, either in its

appearance or its properties, to its progenitors: When the combining equivalents of chlorine and sodium are brought together, and we see these two elements disappear, and a third something, what we know as common salt, take their place, we seem to be brought to the very origin of things, and to be watching an act of creation. The outer world, organic and inorganic, is full of this. Its history is that of perpetual transformation, in which, under the action of chemical affinities, matter is ever changing its shape, dropping old powers and qualities, and taking on new. The question we now ask is, whether a precisely similar law is not discernible in the inner life; whether, in short, there is not a chemistry of the soul, with its law of combining proportions, and consequent disappearances and transformations. If so, it is of the last importance to us all that we should know something about it.

First, as to the fact. When we study men, whether the celebrities we read of in biographies, or the ordinary specimens we meet in the street, we find the phenomena of their life resolving



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themselves substantially into two things—first, the sum of their original qualities, and second, the currents of external influence to which those qualities have been successively subjected. An Ignatius Loyola up to well on in his early manhood shows the characteristics and leads the career of a Spanish gallant of the period. Then comes, first, a cannon-ball which breaks his leg at the siege of Pampeluna, and next the opening of a book of “Lives of the Saints,” to while away the period of his invalidism. The play of the new influence upon the old qualities produces, as result, the wondrous life of the Father of Jesuitism. The Kingswood colliers, to whom John Wesley preached, were originally, like their fathers before them, hard-working and hard-drinking fellows, whose idea of enjoyment lay largely in horseplay and coarse brutalities. When upon these characters was poured the magnetic stream of spiritual influence which the Methodist leader had at command, the resultant was in many cases a type of life and feeling so new that the possessors of it were scarcely recognisable, either to themselves

or their neighbours. The Spanish knight of the sixteenth century and the Kingswood colliers of the eighteenth may be taken as examples of what meets us everywhere in history and contemporary life. A man's original qualities, struck upon by some influence from without, unthought of and unsought by himself, may combine with this new element to produce a human result as different from the first as water is different from either the hydrogen or the oxygen out of whose union it has been formed.

Viewed in this light a man's actual life appears to be only one out of a thousand might-have-beens. No human, and we surely may also say no Divine judgment of it would be adequate which did not take into account the character of the forces which have played upon the stock of inward quality with which it began. The consideration will be enough in a thoughtful mind to stay a too-confident dogmatism as to human destiny, and to incline to Madame de Staël's opinion that "if we knew all we should forgive all."

The topic has, however, a bearing on things nearer home than speculations of this kind. The sum of domestic happiness would, for instance, be enormously increased if men and women would take the trouble to study the subject of soul chemistry in its relation to home life. Many a household is the scene of perpetual storm because a wife has not yet learned, by a thousand experiences, that to bring to bear a given tone and temper on her husband is as certain to produce an explosion as would be the application of a match to a barrel of gunpowder. That she has an influence at command which, when turned upon his nature, will produce a very different result is evident from the fact that he once fell in love with her. To know the characters we are in daily contact with, and the influence which draws out their best and represses their worst, is to have mastered the chemistry of domestic bliss. This is a branch of science in which all makers of homes ought to be compelled to take their diploma.

Christianity in its history, its doctrines and its daily spiritual work at once assumes and

proves the operation of such a chemistry of souls as we have been discussing. Its whole appeal is based on the possibility of a new human product being obtained from the combination of original qualities with a special influence. Man may become a new creature by union with a spiritual power which waits to combine with him. This is in essence the Christian Gospel, and it is as scientific as it is inspiring. Churches become centres of irresistible power, and homes the scenes of sunny brightness, when the men and women composing them recognise as a truth and realise as an experience that they were made with a view to an actual union with God, a combination of His nature with their own, out of which a new and higher form of life is to emerge.

## V.

### Deposits from the Unseen.

THAT we stand in the midst of two worlds, the visible and the invisible, is, with varying degrees of intensity, recognised by every one. What, however, is not so evident is the relation between the two. To the mass of men the material universe represents the solid, substantial actuality of things, the invisible looming behind it as a vague, shadowy something, dimly appreciated, and almost unreal. But this is the hugest of blunders, and one which must be straightway got rid of if we would set ourselves right with life. What, after a little patient thinking, becomes clear up to the point of certainty is that everywhere the seen is the offspring of the unseen, that the visible is, so to say, a secretion or deposit of the invisible, that matter is the handmaid and plaything of thought; that, in a word, the one primordial

and universal reality is spirit. We propose here, in a few scattered observations, first to try and make this plain, and then to see what consequences it seems to carry.

To begin with what is close at hand, it is remarkable how, in the commonest things, we have to recognise the reign of the *invisible*. We walk through a city and observe its buildings. What are they? So much stone and lime, iron and timber? If that were all they would not be buildings, but rubbish heaps. Their principal ingredient is not matter, but thought. These structures are, in fact, embodied ideas. The inner life of the capitalist, the architect, the contractor, the artist who constructed and embellished them; their desire, their will, their education and taste are here visualised. The wood and stone are penetrated throughout with mind, and tell the story of it to all who can see and hear. But some of these buildings have more to say than that. Here is a house which has been lived in for years and generations. The owner of it was born there, as were his fathers before

him. The visible part of it might be scheduled as so many tons of second-hand building material. Is it this, though, which of itself makes the place dear to him; which, when he returns to it from far pilgriming in the world, causes his heart to throb and his eye to moisten? The house is what it is to him because it is rich with deposits of the unseen. It is saturated with the inner life of those whom he loved and are gone, of those whom he loves and who remain. The dead matter has become beautiful and sacred from its alliance and interpenetration with soul.

This secretion from the invisible is manifest, moreover, not only on matter which has been directly handled by man; it is patent everywhere. Nature in her virgin wildernesses is saturated with it. Our sense of scenery, for instance, is almost entirely a spiritual creation. It is because some beautiful mind has been laid upon it that it has become beautiful for us. Sometimes, indeed, the action is reversed, and Nature appeals directly to us without an intermediary. But the striking thing here is that



the impression still is one of a soul conversing with our soul out of the heart of the material. Have we not all felt at times what William Watson in his lines on 'Autumn' so finely expresses !

And spectral seem thy winter-boding trees,  
Their ruinous bowers and drifted foliage wet;  
O Past and Future in sad bridal met,  
O Voice of everything that perishes  
And Soul of all regret.

The sentiment here is simply true to the fact. In such a scene nature seems full of a thought which answers to our own.

But we are as yet only on the threshold of the topic. The next step brings a whole universe upon our hands. For what we have said about a separate building or a separate scene in nature applies with equal force when we contemplate the entire system of things. What, after all, is the whole material universe but a mass of petrified thoughts ! The mere fact that we can give any rational account of the world argues, when we think the matter out, a reason immanent in it which answers to our own. Every piece of its matter, related as it is

to time and space, to cause and effect, to similarity and dissimilarity, to genera and species, to statics and dynamics, to chemical, biological, and infinite other affinities, is by these very facts seen to be penetrated through and through with logic, with reason, with will, in a word with spirit. It does not require the facts adduced and the line of argument followed in that finely conceived work, "The Unseen Universe," valuable as they are in themselves, to convince us that the material world is a deposit from the invisible. A true philosophy, starting from any piece of chalk picked up on the highway, and dealing thoroughly with the categories contained in it, will arrive inevitably at the same conclusion. It is not poetry, nor sentiment, nor the religious instinct only which declare the material world to be the vesture of an Eternal Mind. The dry necessities of logic leave no other conclusion open.

That every commonest thing we handle brings us thus into the immediate presence of the world's Governing Thought and Will should be enough in itself to save our life from

triviality. And closely related to this thought is another which may well help that conclusion. Every particle of matter, we have urged, is full of deposits from the unseen. But nowhere are these deposits so manifest as in our own personality. We know how the invisible things of a man's character write themselves upon his feature; how out of a life devoted to high purposes there come subtle beauties of form and expression which advertise the nobleness within; and how, on the other hand, the inward corruption of an ignoble soul puts its disfiguring mark on eye and brow and lip, and distorts every facial line. This is one of nature's broad hints which only a fool will neglect. Our inward experiences are none of them simply gone through and then done with. The joy or pain of this moment, the mind's thought, the will's "yes" or "no" leave, each, behind them a deposit of effect which will work endlessly and in a thousand forms. Eastern philosophy has a doctrine on this subject which the German Ulrici, in his theory of the spiritual body, has

in some degree adopted. That character creates environment; that the spirit's clothing in a future state will have been woven for it by its thought and deed in this, seems, indeed, the result to which all the facts of the case lead us.

We have here, in fact, the doctrine of heaven and hell, towards which the most earnest thinkers of both East and West have instinctively gravitated. The outward state represented by these terms, men of all creeds are beginning to feel must be a creation of the inward character; in other words, is a deposit from the invisible. The place fits the state. It is curious to see the practical agreement between schools of thought the most widely separated. Let us, for instance, put side by side utterances on this subject by that most sceptical of poets, Persian Omar Khayyam, and that most fervent of Catholic believers, St. Catherine of Genoa. Says the poet:—

I sent my soul through the Invisible  
Some letter of the after life to spell,  
And after many days my soul returned  
And said, "Behold myself am heaven and hell."

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On her side the Catholic saint avers that "if a soul dying in mortal sin did not find hell, which is the proper place for her state, she would be in greater suffering than she feels in that place, and it is this which causes the soul's impetuosity to precipitate herself into it." Both sides here, it must be said, express themselves with sufficient crudeness, but a solid truth gleams in each. Taken together, they give us the kernel of what is to be known on this theme. The future state, according to all the analogies of the spiritual life, as we find them in the Scriptures and in experience, will be a projection, on a vaster scale, of the law which works around us now and which we have been trying here to illustrate, namely, that the inner creates the outer, that, to repeat once more our formula, environment is "a deposit of the Unseen."

## VI.

### The Soul's "I Will."

"I HAVE spent forty years," said Dr. Johnson, in one of his bitter moments, "in making futile resolutions." And for a man who, after again and again solemnly vowing to himself to rise at six in the morning, was more often than not in bed at midday, the self-reproach does not seem undeserved. But most of us who have spent many years in the world are in a similar plight. The new Record Office, large as it is, would hardly provide house-room for the number of our unfulfilled resolves. They form part of that possible life which we have not lived, the memory of which haunts us at times so unpleasantly.

It is altogether a curious feature in human life this business of saying "I will." The gainsayer could easily argue against it as an absurdity. It is, he might urge, the egotism

of the present moment which arrogates to itself the function of legislating for all future moments. It is man conspiring against his own liberty. Why should one's future be spent in obeying one's past? Was that earlier moment of resolving superior to this one which I am now come to that this should be bond-slave of that?

The wise man will take note of all this, but he will still go on making resolves. He has to pay for them, but then he has to pay for most things worth having. That the process involves the mortgaging of his future is part of the price for getting something done. If the "I will" of yesterday had no authority over to-day he might feel gloriously independent, but he would make no headway. The chariot would be without driving power. To protest in the interests of freedom is, he knows, entirely futile. The utmost freedom accorded him in this world is a liberty to choose his masters and his forms of obedience. He is obeying his own volition or that of someone else all the time. To refuse is to fall into subjection to



that worse bondage of the whim of the moment, with a resulting character sufficiently suggested by the epitaph on Louis XV.

Ci-git Louis, ce pauvre roi ;  
On dit qu'il fut bon, mais a' quoi ?

The history of man's "I will" is often, we began by saying, one of failure. Looking over its whole extent, however, what we are struck by is not so much the failures in it as the stupendous successes. The story of free volition as exercised on this planet, from its beginnings in the dim appetencies of the amoeba to the self-conscious determinations of the hero and the saint, is the magnificent epic of spiritual evolution. The result is already amazing. A great volition, judged by natural standards, is a miracle. No known law of physics will measure it. We have accurate instruments for gauging the ordinary world forces. We can estimate them in volts, or in surface pressures, or in foot-tons. But where are our instruments for expressing the impact on the world of the "I will" of a Cæsar, of a Columbus, of a Paul? In the viewless realm of a great

man's consciousness ; in the moment when he says to himself "the die is cast," whether it be to explore an unknown sea, or to found an order, or to evangelise a continent, there is evolved, we know not how, a force compared with which Niagara is a toy. The wonder of a volition of this kind is that it never exhausts itself. The range and the results of it grow constantly with the revolving years. There is no motor known on this planet comparable for a moment in sheer power to the one hidden away in the recesses of man's own spirit.

The natural history of the great volitions by which the world has been changed would be infinitely interesting had we only the materials for it. We should find in most cases a kind of Divine necessity closing in upon the mind, and making it feel that the path entered was the inevitable one. Something of the instinct which sends the swallow on its voyage through the air draws the hero to his task. He feels with Haydn, when, in his German-English, he spoke of the mighty chorus in his

*Creation*, "Not from me, but from above it all has come." Not that a man reaches a great purpose at a bound, or has one thrust into him, as it were, ready-made. "Nature does not take leaps" inside a man's mind any more than in the outside world. The final resolve is attained through all manner of circuitous routes and of preliminary essays. Often a man turns into his fated road without knowing it. Luther had not the faintest idea of breaking with Rome when he opposed Tetzel. The initial volition covers only the smallest o curves from the beaten track. The rest come by continuing to follow it.

Most interesting, too, is it to note the way in which Nature, when she has brought her *protégé* to the determination which marks a new departure, works to keep him in it. The new leader speedily finds himself surrounded by comrades and followers. His solitary volition finds an echo in other minds, and the response heartens him. The fresh path, by its novelty, even by its perils, fascinates. The sense of being committed to a course

comes also as a grand determinant. The pathfinder's whole manhood, his pride, his fighting instinct, his staying power, are roused and engaged in the task of seeing the thing through. Nature seems here, in fact, to be straining every nerve to guard and develop the fresh "variation," and so bring about the furtherance of life. The new departure will, if it occur in the theological or ecclesiastical department, be banned probably as heresy or schism. The higher biology has a different way of looking at it.

A department of the subject which we can only here glance at is the "I will" by which a man governs not only himself but his fellows. The man of strong volition rarely exercises it on himself alone. "Follow my leader" is a game as old as man, and almost the only one of which the majority of the race are capable. Human equality is a doctrine which Nature scoffs at. To find his master is the average man's greatest piece of good fortune. For the leader who opens a road for his weaker brother across the trackless waste, who stands as a

shelter for him over against the naked, appalling Infinite, is the greatest of benefactors, and men gather swiftly where such an one is to be found. He can make almost his own terms. A Bernard may emigrate to the empty wilderness of Clairvaux and knights and nobles press on his steps; a George Fox cuts convention to its roots, but disciples throng to him; a Wesley draws up a severe and minute code of conduct, and multitudes take it ready-made at his word. If only the great leaders in religion had been content with this power! It is the deepest blot upon Augustine that he taught Christendom to impose its "I will" by other than spiritual means. Well had it been for him and the after ages could he only have remembered the great word of another African Father, and have said with Tertullian, "*Sed nec religionis est cogere religionem, quæ sponte suscipi debeat, non vi*: it is no part of religion to compel religion, whose essential it is that it be accepted freely and not through force."

In our day the detestable mediæval application of the text, "Compel them to come in,"

has happily ceased. We no longer "compel" to orthodoxy by fire and sword. The terrorism, however, of those petty "scruples," of which Dr. Johnson truly said "They made many miserable, but never made any good," is not yet over. The Sunday of Ruskin's boyhood, whose rigour, he tells us, cast its shadow over him as early as Friday, has relaxed its gloom. But there are still numbers of family circles where the determination of the head to enforce the narrowest ideas and practices by the iron hand of authority is creating in young hearts a sense of passionate rebellion and a hatred of the very name of religion. Of all the enemies in Christ's household none have been so dangerous as the people who have sought to drive instead of to draw, to worry instead of to win.

A man may, as we here see, make terrible mistakes in the exercise of his will power. But the greatest mistake, after all, will be to fail to cultivate it, or to pursue a course which destroys its first strength. He who by animal indulgence, by slavery to evil habit, has lost

the inner impetus which makes his "I will" a power upon himself and others, has sunk out of the category of manhood. The last thing we should venture to do is to break word with ourselves. That is to open a leak in the vessel which contains our inmost essence of life. For when all is said, the power to form a clear, strong, self-conscious determination, and, against whatever strain of opposition, to quietly abide in it, is the special sign of man's royalty, the mark by which he is recognised as akin with the Divine.



## VII.

### Our Twofold Life.

THE average man is being hard pressed just now on his spiritual side. The old arguments with which he used to fight his inbred materialism seem breaking down. He is less easy than he used to be about his footing in the invisible, and more inclined despairingly to accept that view of things which regards death as, in Horace's words, the

*Ultima linea rerum.*

It is pathetic to witness the eagerness with which, in quest of some light on his problem, he turns to this quarter and to that—to occultism may be, or to the dicta of a self-styled Infallible Church, or even to the expected literal fulfilment of symbolic Apocalypses. As of old, he seeketh a sign and no sign is given him. And for a good reason. If he will only consider, he will find that he himself is the sign. Why

search for miracles when he is the miracle? He has only to study the plain, obvious facts of his own nature to see a clear way to the invisible. That study will begin with the natural. But it will assuredly land him in the supernatural. We propose here to glance along two lines of fact about our lives, very different from each other, but both pointing one way, and landing us at the same inevitable conclusion.

Each of us is conscious of a twofold life, one which we live in common with our neighbours, and another which we live all alone to ourselves. Let us, to begin with, see what is contained in the first, the common life. An immense part of us belongs to what may be called the general consciousness. Our own feelings and thoughts form a drop in an ocean of similar thought and feeling which is heaving and surging through the world around us. Language is only possible on the supposition of a community of ideas, of which its vocables are the signs. A Handel chorus, a Beethoven sonata, are the souls of music in one individuality calling to the same

soul in a million others. A great orator or a great musician, in perfect command of an audience, brings this spiritual unity to perhaps its most striking expression. Under the impassioned appeal or the moving, mighty harmony, a thousand separate men and women, gathered promiscuously and knowing nothing of each other, have ceased to be individuals. They are blended for the time into a huge common consciousness, which laughs and cries, exults or despairs, as one single soul. It is in the exaltation of such a moment that we realise the full force of Goethe's saying, that "only mankind together is the true man, and the individual can only be joyous and happy when he feels himself in the whole."

But this "feeling oneself in the whole" implies something further, which will come out more clearly, perhaps, when we study it in relation to a special department of the common inner life—that, namely, of intelligence, knowledge, the perception of truth. If a thoughtful man asks himself why he believes that truth

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will certainly conquer error, he falls back for an answer to his belief in the existence of a verifying faculty, common to the race, which slowly but irresistibly separates the true from the false. "The human race," says Lamennais, "advances towards the truth infallibly by the evolution of its universal reason." This "universal reason" may for the moment be described as the common agreement of humanity about the universe in which it is placed. It interrogates that universe, and obtains in the end answers in which all minds agree. In other words, it finds the universe intelligible. Turn that proposition round, and it means that the common mind in us, as it studies the world, is really studying a mind outside us. If the universe were not rational—that is, the expression of a mind, and a mind, too, which works on the lines of our own—nothing is more certain than that we could come to no possible agreement about it. Man's growing perception of truth is, then, in reality his growing perception of one central, underlying, and eternal mind, in whom all truth inheres. What he digs out of

the world with his investigator spade are really the thoughts of a Thinker who was there before him. The gaze outward of the common reason is, as the higher philosophy everywhere is recognising, a look upon God.

But this inference from the common mental life comes not only as the result of the gaze outward, but also of the gaze inward. We have described the "Universal Reason" of humanity as its common agreement about the universe. But no one who has studied the growth of civilisation, what has been happily termed "the education of the human race," will regard that as a complete definition. The slowly but steadily broadening light which that marvellous movement shows, the unceasing uplift it reveals in knowledge and morals, is felt to be a work, not by man, but a work *in* man. The separate jets of light, to which in history we give human names, are fed from one fountain. The common uplift is the effort of one spiritual energy which is the groundwork of every soul, and which for ever seeks to realise itself in man as its organ. Amiel,

whose mind was a battle-ground on which was fought out the whole conflict of modern thought, could not, with all his waverings, escape from this. "I realise," says he, "with intensity, that man in all that he does that is great and noble is only the organ of something or some one higher than himself." Human reason in its look outward and its look inward is alike face to face with God.

But the common consciousness, vast as is the range of its significance, is after all only a part of each soul's life. There is another part which also carries its inference. The mystery of our solidarity is not more wonderful than the mystery of our loneliness. In studying this part of the theme we seem to have almost to unsay the other part. We have spoken, for instance, of language as an expression of the common consciousness. But as a real interpreter of the soul how far does it go? When a man tells me he is glad or that he is in pain, what kind of an insight has that given me as to his actual interior? The words seem to lift for a moment the

curtain at the window of his personality. But they do not open the door. The new photography may reveal our neighbour's skeleton. It will give us no picture of his real self. We are, indeed, to each other, even to our intimates, a kind of Australia, with a few settlements and points of contact and commerce upon the coast, but having a vast interior within, all unexplored and unknown. We talk of the union between mother and child. But when the child lies racked with pain and the mother would give anything to lessen the suffering by sharing it, not one pang of it reaches her. Between her and it is a great gulf fixed which she may not pass over. Truly has it been said, "There are thoughts which have no confidant, sorrows which are not shared. We dream alone, suffer alone, die alone."

Is this, we may well ask, a chance arrangement? For what end has been reared the impassable wall which bars off our inmost life from the nearest and dearest of our kind? Is it meant as a prison, or as an insulator;



to shut us off only from something, or to preserve something to us? Let the thoughtful man again turn in upon himself and question his consciousness for answer. He will find that it is precisely his isolation from man that has driven him upon the infinite; that the sphere of things in which he has no communication with his fellow is that where he constantly hears a voice, and feels an impact which is not from man. His unreached self is not a prison but a sanctuary. A speech is heard there. It is the intercourse between man and a Spirit that witnesses with his.

Along two plain roads then, trodden of us all, we come out upon the same conclusion. The facts of our life in common and of our life alone, the one by an intellectual, the other by a moral compulsion, alike force us upon God, and make Him inevitable. And if this be so; if the logic of life compels us to admit it as penetrated within and without by a mind, "by whose thought we think, by whose knowledge we know, and in whose light we see," indwelt by One who is not only

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Thought but Love, whose heart in its outflow upon us is the source of our noblest affection—our spiritual inheritance, spite of all appearances to the contrary, stands secure. The changes that may come over the form and expression of our religious faith are but the outworking of an evolution, whose guiding thought and purpose have that Mind and Heart for their source, and from whose eternal power and eternal love none shall ever separate us.

## VIII.

### The Soul's Music.

A GREAT musician is an interpreter-in-chief of the mind's inner world. There is nothing which, properly considered, leads us deeper than does music into the heart of things; nothing which brings to us more convincing evidence that man belongs to a spiritual order and is related intimately and irrevocably to a world unseen. When we think of what music contains and what it suggests we do not wonder that Plato, the great prophet of the ideal, should have put it so high as an element of education and as an inspirer of virtue. If we want to know what God is and what His relations are to the human soul we have, in this great realm of ordered harmony, what might be described almost as a distinct revelation ready to our hand.

We speak of instruments and of players

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upon them. But a study of the elementary facts of music soon shows us that the primal musical instrument is the human soul. Our consciousness is a keyboard incessantly played upon by an unseen performer. Let us see how matters stand. The process of producing music may be described as a process of disengaging spirit from matter. On one side, metals, woods, wires, strings are subdued from their roughness and wrought to fineness. On the other side, human hands, eyes, ears, breath are trained to co-operate with these elements in a certain way. The result is that sounds are produced, notes higher and lower, united in a combination which is called harmony, and which creates a certain sensation in the mind. Inquiring yet further, we discover that these sounds are obtained by vibrations, whose numbers and relations to each other are strictly calculable, can be expressed, indeed, in terms of logarithms. Music, then, is under law. It is founded on abstruse calculations. Man did not make these laws. He finds them there, ready-made and waiting for him. They

have an unseen author who is evidently a calculator, a mathematician.

But this is only the beginning. When we study music we find that a mind full of ideas has been there before us, laying out principles which man's feebleness of intelligence spells out bit by bit. What we next discover is that not only has there been here a pre-existent intellect, but an intense æsthetic feeling. In other words, the revelation is not only of a Person who is a mathematician, but of a Person who has the soul of a musician. See what the facts are. One of the first is that the soul finds in musical sounds, arranged as we have seen by a mathematical mind, a mysterious language addressed to itself, which it intuitively understands and to which it immediately responds. What is that power of the soul which, when some great organ thunders, takes the mighty play of vibrations and turns it to range upon range of sublime emotion? What is there at the back of a minor key that it makes the soul feel as though it were losing paradise over again, or behind the upward swell of a Halle-

lujah Chorus that when we hear it we feel as did Handel in composing it, as though we also "did see heaven opened, and the holy angels and the great God Himself"? How comes this leap of inner feeling in recognition of what, in terms of matter, is only a series of aerial vibrations? Why should men in common, varying only in the degree of their culture, realise within themselves laughter, weeping, storm, calm, despair, rapture, heaven, hell as the sounds smite the ear? What mystery is this that the mind greets music as an acquaintance whom it has known of old, permitting it, with the privilege of a familiar, to enter its most secret recesses, to unlock all its doors, and to move it as a spirit conversing with spirit?

One does not wonder that brooding over such problems men have listened to the Platonic solution that the soul greets music as an old acquaintance because it is an old acquaintance; that the human soul is old, ages old, coming into this world from a higher sphere where it knew these things, so that when it meets them now it knows them again and can translate

their speech. For ourselves we prefer a simpler and a more Christian answer. It is that man, as the Bible has it, is made in the image of God. The human faculties are, in their way, a replica of the Divine ones. Man is musical because, in an infinite way, God is musical. The emotion which is got out of music is an emotion which He has put into it. The great composers are not inventors or creators. They are mediators, interpreters of the music in God. What they do is to discover His laws of it, to fill themselves with that side of His mind, and then to come down and report what they have seen and heard. It is thus that, as our capacity expands, we get to know more and more of what, on the æsthetic side, God thinks and feels.

But there is more than this. We have before observed how harmony, through its dependence on mathematics, is related to the pure reason. Perhaps after all the distinction we draw between these spheres is a sharper one than what really exists. God's music has probably a far wider range than our conception of it, and



there may after all be something in what Iamblichus, the Neo-platonist, says about "the sublime symphonies of the world, the universal harmony and consonance of the spheres, and the stars that are moved through them, and which produce a fuller and more intense melody than anything effected by mortal sounds." As man goes on learning he will probably discover how music is entwined into the very essences of things. He may realise that beauty is actually a form of harmony, and that Keats is speaking the language of science as well as of poetry when he sings :

Oh what a wild and harmonised tune  
My spirit struck from all the beautiful !

Love, too, may prove to be such a co-ordinated pulsation of kindred souls as translated into another form would be music. And when we remember how musical harmony, in its higher forms, is full of the spirit of discipline and obedience ; how its perfection depends absolutely on the proper relation of weaker and dependent notes to the stronger and dominant ones ; how one cannot do without the

other, and that other in its proper place; we begin to realise the Divine idea of the world's perfect music when all its conditions, its play of interests, its animal passions, intellectual conceptions, spiritual emotions shall work easily into each other under recognised law, and unite in harmony to one great end. Our age is not the time for this concert. It is a time of tuning the instruments and of learning the notes. But the score is already written, and the great Artist moves steadily, if slowly, to the final result.

Closely related to this side of the theme is the thought of that inner harmony which the mind enjoys without the aid of instruments. It is, with high-toned natures, a not uncommon experience that when they have risen to a spiritual height, by an act of self-sacrifice, by an inner reaction from sorrow, by the brooding over them of the Divine Spirit, it has seemed as though unspeakable melodies swept over the soul. They have bent like Saint Cecilia, listening to more than mortal music. The mind, too, has a rare faculty of treasuring up in

its memory-rooms what it has heard from harp and organ, and then of reproducing it subtilised, doubly distilled down to its essence, realising thus to itself a finer, more ethereal note than has ever struck upon the tympanum. Beethoven, when he became stone-deaf, was, perhaps, not entirely to be pitied. His ear was closed to the world's harsh discords, while his mind continued the creator and the audience-chamber of sublimest harmonies.

To fill a nation with music is assuredly one of the highest means of developing its soul. Its enjoyment is one of the highest forms of consciousness, and the road it opens leads straight to the spiritual and the eternal. Some day we may reach Plato's ideal and make it one of the leading elements of education. We may even come to Fourier's programme, and have all the more irksome and monotonous tasks of life made cheerful by noble strains. Music should be made, too, a department of theology. The more men work along this line and think along it, the more apparent will it become that the highest musical realisation requires that

the whole being be disciplined, attuned, and brought into vibrant sympathy with the nature of the Eternal Musician, who created Beauty and Harmony that they might be the expression and the adornment of Holiness.

## IX.

### The Greater Egoism.

FEW subjects have caused more singular confusions of thought than that of Egoism. The term, as generally used, is in bad odour. *Das verdammte Ich*, as Goethe puts it, is everywhere held up as something to be got rid of. The egoist is, by the rough and ready judgment of the man in the street, denounced as a prig and a nuisance. In religion the annihilation of self is declared to be the only way to spiritual perfection. And in the field of economics, an aggressive school of thinkers regards the development of Collectivism and the suppression of Individualism as the only way of salvation for the State.

On the other hand, there are judgments, representing at once popular feeling and the verdicts of highest authority, which point quite the other way. History, religion, art, looked at in one way, appear to pronounce for

Egoism as the latest and highest fruit of time. It seems, for one thing, to be the culmination of ethics. In primitive times man's morality was not individual, but tribal. It was the nation, the State, that was responsible, not the individual. The idea of the separate soul realising its own worth in the sight of heaven, and working out a destiny which was regarded as of infinite interest there, represents a far later and far higher point in man's spiritual evolution. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul," is a pronouncement of the most absolute religious Egoism.

And the noblest art and literature affirm the same principle. What we feel in a great picture or a great book is the suffusion of the one and the other by the soul—the individuality, the idiosyncrasy, we may even say, of their creator. That sense of life, of the universe, in painter or poet, which separates him from everybody else—his Egoism, in fact—is what makes him interesting to us. Similarly in social development. On the value of Egoism here the

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following passage from M. Leon Bourgeois' "Solidarité" may be taken as representing the best economic thought of the day: "In the history of societies, as in that of species, the struggle for individual development is the first condition of all progress. The free exercise of the personal faculties can alone give the initial movement. Finally, the more the liberty of each individual grows, the more the social activity may, and ought, to grow in its turn."

In presence of these seeming contradictions it is time to seek, on this subject, for some common principle which may reconcile them. It is evident that there is a good and bad Egoism, and what we want is to be able to distinguish between the two.

To begin with, the highest teaching in all spheres invites us to Egoism, in so far as it means the attainment of a full self-realisation. That we were not meant to be lost in the mass is proved by the way we are made. It is not for nothing that our separate self has been so absolutely walled off from other existences, its



secret kept impenetrable from the outside, while within it mysteriously constructs its universe from the thousand shadow images of it which dance on the wall of its consciousness. Individuality is writ large on the human threshold. Of this wondrous inner world we are put separately in possession, and told to make of it what we can. The "self" is to grow into as big, as powerful, as rich a self as it is in it to become.

It is at this point that the lines between the good and bad Egoism begin to diverge. We reach the true through a great deal of what is inferior. In our spiritual education it is wonderful how tenderly, how at times almost playfully, we are dealt with. A young man, for instance, begins commonly with an Egoism which consists in the belief in a "self" which is little defined and scarcely understood. He has not yet measured his own nature, or the world with which by-and-by it will try a fall. Older men, who have had their wrestle with destiny and found their limits, smile at the tyro's self-confidence; yet not unkindly, for

they know it is Nature's way of getting the best out of him. Who, after all, will believe in him if he does not believe a little in himself?

But sooner or later, if our neophyte be true to all that is moving and speaking in him, the problem of "self" will assume a new phase. The word, he finds, spells something deeper than he had dreamed of. The "I" he works for and seeks to satisfy becomes more exacting. His innermost self he discovers is not a stomach, nor an animal passion. As he more narrowly observes it he finds it expanding to the illimitable. His nature is, he sees, resting on Another Nature, which forms its essential ground and substance. It dawns on him that this deepest "I" is a rill from an infinite ocean, a spark from a sun.

It is here that, in religion, the reconciliation comes of what seemed a contradiction. A man becomes, in the Christian sense, spiritually alive by finding, and at the same time losing, himself. A greater conception has absorbed the less. What he seeks to please is an "I," which

is, indeed, himself, but which also spells God. He builds the structure of his individuality, but according to a pattern shown him in the Mount. Human nature draws towards its ideal height in proportion as this process approaches completeness. When we read of a Madame Guyon with her earthly joys sapped by the persecutions of a tyrannous husband and of an intolerable mother-in-law, by the death of her children, and by the loss of her early beauty through the ravages of small-pox, and yet, from her anchorage in the Divine, triumphing over all, and preserving the treasure of an unbreakable peace, we get an inspiring insight into the possibilities of human nature when it has found its base.

From this standpoint we can also see very clearly how a bad egoism comes about and in what it consists. By what, in some, seems a kind of arrested development, and in others a deliberate cutting of the line of communication, a man's nature may be shut off from its natural inflow from God and outflow towards its fellows, and the self left as a purely animal and falsely centred one. To such a nature everything

appears in wrong relation, and life's whole business will, in consequence, be fatally bungled. It exhibits at every point an egoism which offends and disgusts. The desire to excel becomes the wish to outshine one's neighbour instead of the noble ambition to do one's best in order to be most helpful to all. Power will be used for a personal gratification which reaches no one outside.

Gaunt famine never shall approach the throne,  
Though Ireland starve great George weighs twenty  
stone.

What egoists of this sort weigh in history is another matter. We repeat, the only permissible egoism is the one in which the ego to which we appeal is at once our deepest self and more than ourself.

That this conception is the true one is shown by the way it works out. We have spoken of art and literature. We demand individualism here, but it must be that greater egoism which is correctly related to the eternal truth and beauty. Without this, what we get is not art but eccentricity. "I am moved," said Socrates,

“by a certain divine and spiritual influence.” And so indeed is every man who has aught of real value to offer to his fellows. The principle works also with equal certainty in its application to social development. Communal perfection can only be reached through individual perfection, for we gain the one in the other. The hero who sacrifices himself for his country is impelled to this by the sense of what he owes to his personal ideal of a citizen. When, at the wreck of the *Birkenhead*, the five hundred officers and men on board, after saving the women and children, themselves went down, drawn up in line on deck, as calmly as if on parade, the sublime act was the triumph of the individual. Had the standard been lower of what the British soldier felt that he owed to himself it would have been impossible.

And this greater egoism will survive death. It is an inextinguishable faith of the soul, when self-realised and ennobled by contact with its Source, that it will preserve its separate being beyond the tomb. What has been developed in it by its long struggle and travail is, it

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feels, something worth keeping, and it will be kept.

Dust to dust : but the pure spirit shall flow  
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,  
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow  
Through time and change, unquenchably the same.

## X.

### Life's Inevitableness.

THERE is a marvellous life apologue in that sentence recorded as having, on a memorable occasion, been addressed to an apostle: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old . . . another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." It is always so. At the beginning we walk by ourselves; later, we have a sense of being carried. In youth we are conscious of our inward vitality, of the power of our self-determination. We refuse to accept things as we find them. We propose to reform the world, to cut our mark deep in it. As the years creep on, what we become aware of is not so much our powers as our limitations. The world is big, and we are little. Life reveals itself as the valley of Rasselas, with freedom of roaming up to a certain point, but where the



traveller comes always in the end upon mountain barriers which he may not cross. With a growing intensity we realise that

To tunes we did not call, our being must keep chime.

Our later thought becomes oppressed with the sense of life's inevitableness. What is true of the individual here seems true of races. The older civilisations become smitten with Fatalism. It is the younger ones who exult in the sense of liberty. Asia groans under existence as though it were a burden. Europe, youthful in comparison, throbs with energy and the sense of what it can do.

Whether young or old, the study of our limits is, however, well worth while. As we pursue it our pride, if we have any, should get some knock-down blows. In the order of our coming Nature has treated us cavalierly, as though we were of small account. Our spoonful of existence has been served out to us, so much and no more, and no questions asked as to how we liked it. Such points as to whether we should wake in the nineteenth century or in

the Old Stone period, in Mars or this planet; whether we should be man or woman, prince, poet, or wood-cutter, and a thousand other things deemed by us important, were determined without the smallest reference to the opinions of the speck of vitality inside us which we call "I."

Think of the fatalism stamped on a man's features, wrought into the fibre of his brain! What are the spiritual chances of a bull neck, holding a narrow forehead, a sullen eye, and sensual mouth, as compared with those of a head every line of which suggests the artist or the saint? Made as they were could a Beethoven help being a musician, or a Beecher an orator? And could this wretch with the criminally-built skull, as Dean Swift said, "not born but damned into the world," take any other road but the one that leads to prison or the scaffold? Men worry at these questions till their brains reel and they deny morality and religion. They cry with the Persian poet:—

O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin

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Beset the road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with predestined evil round  
Enmesh, and then impute my fall to sin.

There is another side to all this, to which we shall return.

But more may yet be said first on this sense of life's inevitableness. Nowhere is it, to a careful eye, more discernible than where, perhaps, we should least expect to find it—in the inner workings of our own mind. When, dazed and dwarfed by the immensity of the outer universe, we retreat to the refuge of our inner self, we find even here a sharp rebuff to our importance. We discover that we are not masters even in our own house. The inward economy of thinking and feeling which we call ourselves is, we find, to a large extent strange to us and independent of us. What power have we over our own sensations? We cannot create sensation. We can only experience it. That a given set of circumstances should produce a given result of pleasure or pain is an arrangement entirely outside our own will. We accept it, we perhaps wonder at it. What we cannot do

is either to explain it or alter it. It gives one an eerie, haunted feeling to realise that within us, yet not of us, there is this unseen agent who arranges for us all the phases of our consciousness, leaving the taste of them simply for our part in the business. This strange registering apparatus, which we did not create and do not regulate, is ready for every conceivable event that may happen to us. If it were announced to us that to-morrow we were to be married or to be hanged, to be made a millionaire or a pauper, a certain preordained sensation would be the result. But what precisely it would be, either in its flavour, its intensity, or its duration, is beyond both our will and our power of prediction. We are, indeed, the spectator of the greater part of our inner life rather than its agent or producer.

But where life's inevitableness strikes on us with most effect is perhaps in its relation to time. There is something fantastic in the play of our feelings about a coming event as compared with the onward movement of our life towards it. The event may be a consum-

mation we desire intensely, or a catastrophe we dread unspeakably. We would give everything to hasten or retard it. We can do neither the one nor the other. The clock ticks. The days come and the nights. We are swept on to the great experience—to realise it, in nine cases out of ten, as neither so good as we had hoped nor so bad as we had feared—and wake to find it a thing behind us, done with, dimming rapidly to our sight as the current bears us forward. We grasp some sweet delight, and say with Faust :

Verweile doch, du bist so schön.

But to linger is precisely what it will not do. The millionaire may build palaces and command the markets. Where he is powerless is to hold a joy in his hand long enough to stamp it with the seal of possession. His acres are solid ground, but he who owns them is a shadow that fleeth.

The One remains, the many change and pass,  
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows flee;  
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity,  
Until death tramples it to fragments. Die  
If thou would'st be with that which thou dost seek.

But this is, after all, a one-sided picture, and to leave it so would be to tell one of those half truths which are a whole falsehood. For the whole truth is not fatalism. Life would be robbed both of its interest and of its importance if it were. What gives to it its infinite zest is the delicate balance of humanity between limitation and freedom. And what is of immense significance here is that these two opposites are not fixed quantities. Man's history discloses an ever-growing freedom with an ever-lessening limitation. His story is that of the evolution of free spirit, with a corresponding increase of mastery over the outward. Palæolithic man had little enough freedom. For ages he bent before powers he did not understand. His will was not good enough to build a canoe. That of his descendants can chain the lightning and cut through mountains. The Rasselas valley has been steadily widening. This constant increment of man's spiritual faculty, of his self-determining power, as disclosed by history, is in itself the refutation of the fatalist theory. With the waxing of his

personality man is less and less bound by the chain of circumstance and more enabled to use it instead as the instrument of his will.

But there is more. We spoke awhile ago of the fatalism of feature and of brain fibre. Closer investigation reveals that this has its limits, and that it is controlled by something mightier. It is not true that a man's features and his cerebral fibre determine the quality of his soul. It would be nearer the mark to say that the soul secretes the brain and forms the features. There is a power dormant behind the lowest brain which, once awakened, will light up the intelligence and refine the face. Nothing is more striking than the transformations of this kind wrought on gutter children when brought under higher influences. The very physical texture is kneaded by an inner force, and its shape and contents changed. This power is strong enough to break the iron chain of heredity. It will make a champion of temperance out of a drunkard's child. Until we have gauged the possibilities of spiritual influence, and of the



soul's response to it, it is idle to talk of character as determined finally by the shape of the skull. We had much better put the horse before the cart, and ask what shapes the skull.

The discussion of our subject from these two sides of will and circumstance shows, then, that the one is gaining on the other, while both are subject to a power greater than either. Human life is limited at every point, but the limitations are constantly falling back, while freedom wins ever-widening areas. Yet it remains that at his best and highest man is a child, learning elementary lessons of the infinite whole, led along a path marked out for him by another mind than his own. For such a being, in such a position, the only sane attitude is that of awe, reverence, and submission. With this may well be mingled a deep and solid joy that he is permitted to take part, however humble, in the elaboration of a scheme so immense, to be a co-worker towards ends, so far beyond his utmost powers to conceive.

Our wills are ours, we know not why,  
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

## XI.

### Our Unpublished Self.

ONE of the most difficult and oft-debated topics in modern politics is the representation of minorities. The generally accepted doctrine is that while the majority is to rule, the minority should have fullest liberty to make its voice heard and its influence felt. Ingenious schemes have been devised to secure the rights of the minority at the ballot-box, and a modern Royal Commission would hardly be complete without its "minority report." There is, however, an existing and deeply interesting system of government in which the minority, while active and powerful, may be said to be unrepresented. It is that which is found in "the viewless realm" of the soul. Plato's idea of human nature, as representing in its varieties the differing forms of a republic, has ever been a popular one, and comes, perhaps, as near the truth as can be expected from analogies of this kind.

Our inward life certainly resembles a democracy in this that its vote is scarcely ever a unanimous one. The decisions come to on the myriad questions brought before it are the result of a conflict of passions and of interests, of moral and intellectual considerations, in which always some part of our complex consciousness has got the worst of it and has gone under. The peculiarity of the position is that the minority here, while often so formidable as to be within an ace of determining the situation, is not allowed to issue any report. The side which wins announces itself at once in decision, speech, or act, and is taken by the outside world as representing the man. The fact is that only a portion of him has been here published, and that often by no means the best or most interesting portion.

It is true that in a healthy nature the best in the long run does generally come to the top. The life of what we call a good man, one who in the main has been dominated and directed by his noblest part, may be compared, as to its inner and its outer features, with the crust of

the earth as related to its interior. The speech, action, and general career which we know and admire are the flowers, fruits, and fair scenery of a surface beneath which—beyond our ken—volcanic fires have raged. We know the surface. The man himself knows the interior, and is modest accordingly.

There is, however, another direction, less immediately connected with a man's moral evolution, where this rule does not so generally obtain. In the sphere of opinion, and especially of religious opinion, it would be one of the most interesting things imaginable if we could get at the "minority vote" as delivered in the interior self of recognised leaders and champions of the different sides. When, for instance, in periods of transition, some doughty fighter for the orthodoxy of the time vehemently maintains its assailed positions, and solemnly denounces the adversary, the multitude who are carried away by his words would be very differently affected if a certain part of the orator could make itself heard by them as well as it is by himself. Often has it been—

and life presents few more pitiful tragedies—that the man's reason, his verifying faculty, when at its clearest, has pronounced inwardly for the enemy. What finds its way to his lips is the voice of his earlier thought-habits, of his prejudices, his interests, and of his fears.

That was the plight of multitudes of religious teachers at the time of the Reformation. The bold words of Mutianus Rufus went home to many an uneasy conscience when he told his fellow clerics of the sixteenth century that “by faith we mean not the conformity of what we say with fact, but an opinion about Divine things founded on credulity, and persuasion which seeks after profit.” A hard time indeed was it for honest men who had not only to find their own way, but who were looked to to lead others, and who realised that

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,  
And matter enough to save one's own.

The Protestant was better off than the Catholic, as having at least opened a way out of convention towards the living fact. But there was a

minority vote inside him also which harassed him terribly. We read now and are heartened by the brave words of a Luther and a Melancthon. It is, perhaps, as well that we have not had also to read all their thoughts. One has a curious sensation in remembering that as late as 1535, when the Reformation seemed immovably established, the German Reformers, bewildered and disheartened, were entertaining overtures for a reconciliation with Rome, the non-success of which appeared, so far as one can see, to have resulted from political rather than from religious causes.

Orthodoxy, in those days, tried to see its way by the light of the fires in which it burned its adversaries. But the burnings were, on its side, often an affair not so much of belief as of make-believe.

Who lights the fagot?

Not the full faith, but the lurking doubt.

The nineteenth century does not light fagots by way of settling its religious difficulties. But in the present crisis of faith, in which questions even more fundamental than those which

agitated the time of Luther are in men's minds, the "lurking doubt" still plays its curious and sinister part in the procedures of orthodoxy. Furious denunciations of opponents come from lips behind which lies a mind three-parts convinced of the opponent's position. The loud discharge of artillery is often not so much a declaration of strength as the firing in despair of the last round of ammunition before hoisting the flag of surrender.

The study of man's "unspoken half" would, however, if only it could be accurately pursued, bring singular results in other directions than this. Closely allied to what has just been said, but with its shade of difference, is, for instance, the question of the "published selves" of the moral preachers and teachers who have been with mankind from the beginning as compared with their unpublished everyday working sentiments. Carlyle has described Seneca as "the father of all such as wear shovel hats." On the one hand proclaiming the maxims of a high philosophy of virtue and self-abnegation, and, on the other, endeavouring to stand well with



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Nero, and to get from him the goodliest possible share of houses, lands, and suchlike conveniences, the Roman philosopher seemed to his later brother sage of Chelsea a beautiful example of the well-placed professional exhorter whose theme is the salvation of the soul, but whose inward self is bent upon gaining the whole world. Lucian, a century later, has drawn a vivid picture of the swarm of adventurers who overspread the Empire, and who gained large sums by orations in praise of virtue which they spent in the practice of secret debauchery. The picture is dolefully similar to that presented by our own monkish orders at the suppression of the monasteries. These men stood outwardly for chastity, poverty, and self-abnegation. Two-thirds of their whole number were proved by irrefragable evidence to be living habitually in the practice of unnameable vice. Our modern clerical and other exponents of ideal moralities have travelled, happily, a long way from such conditions, but the gap between the "published self" of the average mortal put in trust with transcendental life-

schemes and his inward work-a-day sentiments will continue, we fear, still to furnish material for the satirist and the cynic.

It is not always, however, that the unpublished is the worst of us. France was defined by Madame de Staël as "a country where the desire to produce an effect by one's sentiments is stronger than the sentiments themselves." In these islands, at least, the reverse of this is quite as often the truth. The misery of innumerable lives is that they will not or cannot let the best in them come to view. The pathetic lament of Carlyle over his dead wife: "Ah! if only I had five minutes with her, if only to assure her that I loved her through all that!" represents a tragedy which is continually being repeated. The way to avoid it is to let our love for those around us, to whom the expression of it will be as summer sunshine, cease to be part of "our unpublished self."

## XII.

### Impedimenta.

THE Romans, from whom we get the word *impedimenta*, used it mainly of the baggage train of an army. A campaign cannot be waged without a commissariat. But the long file of waggons, bearing victuals, tents and a thousand odds and ends, which follows the troops, is a hindrance as well as a help. It enormously complicates the military position, and its successful management is a sure test of generalship. There are times when the baggage has to be reduced to a minimum, and pinches when it is dispensed with altogether. Frederick the Great won Rossbach by his miraculous marching, on the lightest possible equipment. The useless luxury with which he had encumbered his army helped, on the other hand, to lose Vittoria to Joseph Buonaparte, as it has lost many another battle and many another general.

What is true of armies and campaigns is most suggestively true of human affairs. Life is largely a question of impedimenta. The circumstances, environments, qualities, defects with which we are all daily in contact, form material which is at once help and hindrance. Wisdom consists to a large extent in knowing how to use the baggage-waggon rumbling in our rear, that hamper and yet feed us.

As we look back on the long road humanity has travelled, what, perhaps, strikes us first is the immense weight of encumbrances it has carried. We wonder that, dragging such a load, it has made any progress at all. If we consider man as a spiritual being, and his end the attainment of moral perfection, the long list of his animal instincts, his rapacities, his inbred savagery, seem only a baffling and hopeless hindrance. But it is not so. What we now call the lower qualities were, in man's pre-moral stage, the motor power which carried him along. He wanted them in his fight with nature and with wild beasts—would in fact hardly have survived without them. And

history shows how steadily he drops them when he reaches the stage where they hamper only and do not help. It has in its day been a fashionable materialistic argument that human morality is essentially stationary. Nothing could be more ridiculously false. The Rome of the Cæsars had travelled a long long way beyond the earliest primitive ideas of justice and social duty, but what is the moral distance between ourselves and that Rome—between us and a civilisation which could, as in the Servile war, cause crosses to be erected from the imperial city to Capua and crucify ten thousand slaves together upon them? One need not, indeed, to measure the moral movement, take nearly so long a period as this. It is only a century and a-half since Walpole's time. But what chance would a man have to-day of becoming Prime Minister, far less of enjoying twenty years of uninterrupted power, if, possessed though he might be of all the Georgian Premier's splendid abilities and of all his solid strength, he dared to practise his public corruption and his private de-

baucheries? When we study what man has come out of, the load he has carried, and the milestones he has already passed, the boundless moral optimism of the New Testament—its Gospel of ultimate perfection—becomes strictly scientific.

Narrowing our point of view, we find a striking illustration of the way in which hindrances become helps in man's family life. The best chapters in Professor Drummond's "Ascent of Man" are those in which he describes the evolution of the father and the evolution of the mother. The human child, helpless and dependent for a longer period than any other earthly creature, entailed a heavy burden of care and watchfulness on primitive man and woman. It was that burden, as Dr. Drummond so admirably shows, which proved the moral making of them. Out of it came altruism, devotion, sacrifice, father and mother, love, the foundations, in fact of the higher human life. The same story is, in another way, reproduced in the domestic histories of to-day. When a man marries he unquestionably in-

creases his burdens. Harassed paterfamilias, in pessimistic mood, is apt to ask himself why he exchanged the simplicity and ease of bachelorhood for this complex of cares and of expenditures. He could have raced for wealth or scholarship or distinction with so much better chances without this handicap! May be. Some men and women are better without marrying, just as some expeditions are better without baggage. But the main body will not make progress that way. The majority of us grow to what there is in us of genuine value to the world largely through the difficulties at which we kick. A man will put his back into the uplift when it is for wife and bairns. To know them happy through his exertions will be a healthier reward than wealth or fame. His family life is Nature's way of coaxing the best out of him.

Still further narrowing the view, we may see every day, in the individual lives around us, how a man's impedimenta help while hindering. The seeming disadvantages are part of the machinery of progress. It is notorious how



often plain-featured women marry, while better favoured ones are left in the lurch. Is the secret that beauty is apt to be too self-satisfied, while plainness seeks to offer an equivalent for outward lack in inner quality? It was said of Madame de Staël, who was the reverse of a beauty, that she could bring any man to her feet in a quarter of an hour by the charm of her manner and of her converse. If all women had from the beginning been beauties man would probably have fared much worse than he has.

As suggestive, too, as it is touching, is it to see how the impedimenta of disease and pain have played their part in the forward movement. It does not, we know, adequately explain their presence in the world to say they have helped to humanise people, but that is the fact, nevertheless. The poor deformed child has made the father's heart bigger. The loss of her baby has dowered the stricken woman with a motherhood felt in a thousand homes. It may be that in the end humanity, thanks to science and a higher knowledge of the laws of life, will out-

grow its diseases. We look for the state when "there shall be no more pain." But man would never have come to his full moral stature without it.

In man's purely intellectual progress, too, it is interesting to observe the part played by his impedimenta. We enter the world of thought dragging behind us a long train of inherited preconceptions. They are very valuable in their way, and to cut loose from them would be for most of us a very perilous operation. Mr. Balfour, in his "Foundations of Belief," has, perhaps, exaggerated the rôle of authority in mental affairs, but his striking picture has undoubted truth in it. The past has stained every window through which light streams into the mind, and we cannot, if we would, see things apart from its colouring. A Descartes, in his quest for truth, imagines he has thought himself away from every possible prejudice and prepossession, and that his *Cogito ergo sum* represents an absolutely primal conception. We know how much he was mistaken. We cannot drop the past if we would, and no

healthy mind will try. What we can do is to clarify our view of it and of our relation to it. In that way we shall rid our baggage-waggon of some loads of shells and husks, carrying their contents in smaller compass and in sublimated form.

The men who show us how to do this are the prophets of their age. They generally go themselves in light marching order. They have an easily solvable relation to the world's respectabilities, conventions and worldly considerations. When Chrysostom replied to the threat of the Emperor, that he could not take from him his goods because his treasure was in heaven, nor exile him because his fatherland was above, he showed the relation of a genuine prophet to his impedimenta. Modern fashionable ecclesiasticism has lost this powerful gift of detachment. An Anglican Bishop carries too much baggage for such campaigns. A seat in the Lords, a palace and great revenues, a luxurious table, and the smiles of duchesses, have proved for centuries entirely effective against any episcopal inclination for plunging. Since Atterbury, no

occupant of an English see has really risked his place for principle.

Let us sum up. A man's baggage train forms an indispensable part of his equipment for this world, and on his management of it depends much of his inner and outer success. It is the part of wisdom to learn what amongst this luggage is only a hindrance, and to dispense with it. The leaders, in winning their battles for humanity, have often, in heroic faith, to cut themselves off from their base, and dash on without visible supplies. And we all, in that great race, disclosed to us in the Gospel, for life's highest prize, must needs "lay aside every weight," and that greatest and heaviest of impediments—"the sin that doth so easily beset us."

### XIII.

## Of Well-Dressed Souls.

SINCE the day when Adam and Eve discovered their lamentable lack of clothing, the subject of dress has been of perennial interest to the human race. It has, as every student knows, bulked enormously in literature. Carlyle in his "Sartor Resartus," while illuminating, has by no means exhausted the topic. He was not the first, as he will certainly not be the last, Clothes Philosopher. His successors of the present day even are legion. Woman is inquiring whether man has any prescriptive right to a monopoly of the bifurcated garment, while the accomplished editor of *Aglaia* lectures humanity in general on the lack of artistic first principles displayed in the covering and adornment of both sexes. What we have here to say, however, concerns an aspect of the great dress question somewhat outside the professional purview of the Parisian modiste or the

Bond Street tailor. The article of attire we propose to discuss was worn by humanity before it sewed fig-leaves together. Our bodies, strictly speaking, are an underclothing. They are the dress of the soul. To say this is, we know, to repeat what has been a commonplace from Socrates downwards, to go no farther back; but the theme it suggests is not even yet entirely exhausted of applications. It will, indeed, we predict, draw more and more attention to itself, for it is crammed with science, with ethic, and with religion.

When Kingsley says that the soul secretes the body as a crustacean secretes its shell, he is setting in the framework of a scientific terminology the ancient mysticism which declared the soul's priority over the body in time, as well as its supremacy in quality and function. Nowhere, however, has the idea been better or more tersely expressed than in our own Spenser where he says:—

Of soul the bodie forme doth take  
For soul is forme and doth the body make.

It is obvious, however, that this view, fascinat-

ing to the poet and the spiritual thinker, of the soul building the body, must be taken with some large reservations. Life is a little too complex to permit of being summed up in epigrammatic definitions. To ignore the influence of external conditions, such as food, climate, and outside circumstances generally, not only upon bodily structure, but upon feature and expression, would be to go to an extreme as great in one direction as that of Buckle in the opposite, when he declares it would be enough for him to know the climatic and food conditions of a people to predict its character and history. What it is safe, and at the same time sufficient, for our purpose to allege here is, that the soul or interior spiritual life of a man, working under the limitations of his outer environment, is incessantly weaving itself into the structure of his body, suffusing it with its own subtle essence, until the glance of the eye, the lines of the mouth, the set and expression of the features, nay, the very carriage and gait reveal to the experienced eye the character of the inhabitant within. The



saintly soul clothes itself here in its robes of white; sensuous men, like Ulysses' companions under the power of the sorceress, take on the swinish likeness; while Cain, in every age and nation, carries his brand.

It is this fact which, for one thing, makes the study of faces and of portraits so fascinating. We feel that here we are looking at souls. To Schiller's saying, *Verwandte sind sich alle stärken Seelen*, we may add that not only are all great souls related, but that their physical features reveal the family likeness. Who that has looked at a portrait of St. Teresa, for instance, could find any difficulty in fitting those features to the "Treatise on Prayer"; or in believing her when, speaking of herself as persecuted, she says, "My soul is then so mistress of itself that it seems that it is in its kingdom, and has everything under its feet"?

In this view a man's own face should be to himself a book of judgment, in which the laws of the universe are legibly writing down his sentence. There is surely no work on the evidences of religion more potent or more con-

vincing than the book of the human countenance. He that runs may read here of a moral Lawgiver behind the scenes who says that the way of the spirit is the way of life, while the way of the flesh is the way of rottenness and death. Man begins his inward career, to use a sentence of Amiel, "as a tamer of wild beasts, and these wild beasts are his passions. To cut their claws, to muzzle them, to tame them, to make of them domestic animals and servants, foaming at times but submissive, that is personal education." A glance at his mirror in mid or later life should reveal to a man whether all this has been done or is doing, or whether, on the contrary, the menagerie has overpowered the keeper.

The looking-glass, the use of which has been mainly under the ban of moralists as ministering to vanity and self-consciousness, is indeed in a way the sternest of monitors. When a man finds reflected in it a wavering, uncertain eye, and a face development, the accentuation of which is all in the lower features, he will be indeed blind and deaf if he cannot recognise

there his perishing soul's signal of distress. It is time for him then to go on his knees, to make vows, to choose anew his companions and his haunts, to forswear his appetites, to

Clasp his teeth,  
And not undo 'em  
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em.

There is a curious modern travesty of our doctrine, eminently characteristic of the time, which, in a discussion of this sort, ought not to pass quite without notice. The fact that the thoughts and emotions which constitute our inner life influence in a most important way the features and general appearance, is in this system fully admitted. But the emphasis of its application is laid not upon the culture of the soul, but upon that of the body. With the people who hold it the business of life is to look handsome, blooming, and young for the longest possible period. To this ideal anything in the way of inward stress and strain, of mental wear and tear, of soul wrestlings such as precede the hero's deed or the prophet's utterance, would be regarded as fatally inimical, and be accord-

ingly eschewed. The art of life with such is to avoid all violent emotions and the occasions of them. Let the people who want it go after

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,

and get scarred and dented all over in the struggle. The dilettanti followers of the newer doctrine will be quite contented if, without any experience of this sort, by a sedulous guarding of themselves from exhausting drains upon their sympathy, or shocks to their equanimity, they can achieve the success of being taken for thirty when they have reached fifty. Verily these have their reward. Their soul gets a dress exactly suitable to its quality and capacity. It is pretty and, one may see, ornamental. When, however, one contrasts its meaningless simper with the majesty suggestive of infinite possibilities, which looks from the eyes and suffuses the features of the greater natures to whom the body has at best been an instrument, and oftentimes been felt as a

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prison, one realises that the spiritual system of the universe, while "it suffers fools gladly," permitting them even to thrive in their own way, uses them nevertheless as pitifullest of illustrations of its own eternal law.

There is one aspect of this theme which we can here only hint at, but which has produced some profound speculations among both Eastern and Western thinkers. We mean the relation of it to a future life. Ulrici's doctrine that we are, during our earthly probation, by the action of our will, our moral decisions, and the processes which go to the making of character, building up within us a spiritual body, whose presence reveals itself in imperfect ways while we are yet in the flesh, but which will be the fully-developed organ of the soul after death, runs on lines very similar to Oriental teachings on this subject, which have been reproduced in modern Theosophy. There is something to be said for it, and it may be that revelations are yet in store for humanity along this line of things as the result of future investigations,

Apart from speculation, however, and resting on the basis of what we know, there is evidence enough surely, even in this narrow by-path of investigation, to satisfy discerning souls as to what is life's true end. Man is essentially a spirit. When that is realised, and the soul within him is allowed to seek its proper goal, it will develop into glorious beauty and proportion, and, as it grows, weave for itself a garment worthy its God-like origin and nature. The true soul will be a well-dressed soul. The body will reveal the mind, and be impregnated with its Divine essence.

What is left for us save in the growth  
Of soul to rise up far past both,  
From the gift looking to the Giver  
And from the cistern to the river,  
And from the finite to infinity,  
And from man's dust to God's Divinity !

## XIV.

### The Soul's Colloquies.

A MAN'S chief occupation in this world might be said to be that of conversing with himself. During fifty or sixty years, if he has lived so long, he has been carrying on this interminable colloquy, to which he returns immediately after every interruption from outside. His talk with himself is entirely different in character from any he has with his most intimate friend. If it could be given to the world it would reveal him in some new and unexpected phases. Those who know him most would probably be startled to find from it how much better and how much worse he is than they thought him.

The talk, be it remembered, is not a mere soliloquy, but a veritable conversation, in which quite a number of different voices take part. For the speakers under a man's waistcoat are more numerous even than appear in that notable description in the "Autocrat" of the



multiple individuals that make up a man. By turns we have, in this interior conclave, the upper man haranguing the lower, the animal man coaxing the spiritual, the calculating faculty throwing cold water on the sensibilities. At another time the talk is reminiscent; we hear fifty chatting pleasantly with its former self of twenty, comparing notes on the experiences of thirty years ago. Even in sleep the circle is not broken. In our dreams the "subjective soul," if we may accept Mr. Hudson's ingenious theory, has its innings, and gives to us its own peculiar version of the universe. Deepest element of all in this marvellous converse is the ground tone, speaking through the conscience and through the reason, at times compelling with its sweetness, at times startling with its thunders, of that "Over-soul" in which all individual souls abide, and to which, as Fichte says, "Every separate mind is related as are the branches to the vine."

As a man has no chance throughout his life of quitting his own society, it seems reasonable that he should endeavour, as one of his chief

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concerns, to make it agreeable. This single consideration should be sufficient, one would think, to create in everybody a thirst for culture. The truly educated mind lives in a different world from that of the vulgar. When a man has made acquaintance with the best thinking of ancient and modern times, of his own and other literatures, he has something to talk about with himself. Moltke was said to be "silent in seven languages." He probably found such excellent fellowship in his own brain as to indispose him to seek an inferior article outside. To the intellectually well-furnished man there is indeed no such thing as solitude. His inner world is thronged with life. He gets away from the crowd that he may understand it. This explains partly the love of solitude of the great saints. A Cuthbert, scholar and apostle, spends months at a time shut up on his lonely Farne island and is happy there. One wonders what some modern men would do alone on an island! People rush to what they call society because they have nothing and nobody in themselves worth speaking to.

But to find oneself good society requires something more than parts and culture. A man cannot, for instance, be entirely at ease if some authority within has unmistakably written him down a rogue. That does happen sometimes, and a not inconsiderable part of some men's speech with themselves consists of appeals against this verdict and endeavours to get the case retried at a more lenient court. It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that wrongdoers are always on bad terms with their moral sense. As a matter of fact, that faculty is often the least developed in them, and so the easiest to be hoodwinked. It is curious to see how clever men will address arguments to their conscience which would be rejected in a moment if addressed to their intellect. Rousseau, one of the acutest thinkers in Europe, its *ensor morum*, the creator, in "Emile," of its ideal of education, could content himself, as his personal contribution to morals, with having children by a woman to whom he was not married, with throwing them naked on the world, to be brought up by public charity, and then calmly avowing the

fact in the language of a man on the best of terms with himself, in his published Confessions! From Ireland, to cite an instance nearer home, it is just over three centuries ago that Lord Essex, a well-disposed and religiously-minded English nobleman, sent an account to his sovereign, Elizabeth, of a bit of work done by his troops. At his orders they went to Rathlin Island, off Giant's Causeway, where six hundred Irish women and children had been sent for refuge, and there slaughtered every one of them, unarmed and defenceless as they were, in cold blood. He did the deed, this good Protestant Englishman, and then wrote about it, in a quite calm and equable frame of mind. All the atrocities, be it remembered, have not been done by the Turks. Truly the records of the *forum conscientie* contain some queer verdicts.

There are, however, other than strictly ethical questions involved in a man's talks with himself. Some of the most interesting of these conversations, if they could be reported, would be those carried on by a creative mind

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while in the process of creation. We know very little of what really goes on here, and the man himself could not help us much. Genius is at an entire loss to explain its own products. A whole Philosophy of the Unconscious is needed to understand what really happens. The painter, the poet, the inventor, is haunted awhile by a vague idea, and calls on his mind to elucidate it. His mind, so far as it is conscious, makes no response. But all the time the unconscious part of it is, in some mysterious manner, at work, until at last, and suddenly, there emerges from the brain's unknown depths an idea, a creation, as new and surprising to the thinker himself as it will be by-and-by to the outside world. The work which makes a man famous is not the work he sets out to do. He stumbles on that in a way he cannot explain. When Gibbon took to history he had no idea of writing the "Decline and Fall." It was the history of Switzerland, then of Charles V., then of Florence, that successively filled his mind. Through what a *débris* of unfulfilled projects did he finally argue his way to the Roman

Empire and so to immortality! And that is the story of all great creations.

It is curious to note the difference between a man's talk with himself when young and that of his riper years. The youth is as yet nothing to the world, but he is everything to himself. He has not yet tried a fall with circumstance, and so puts no limit to his possibilities. One should look kindly on this self-conceit, for is it not, after all, Nature's effort to get the best out of her children? If a man has not some belief in himself to begin with he is indeed badly off. The lesson of his limitations will be rubbed into him soon enough, and with relentless thoroughness. Meanwhile the rush of youth, in its eager self-confidence to conquer the world, is a goodly thing. It is like the initial velocity of a cannon-ball, the force of which determines its range. When Disraeli, failing in his first speech in the House, says, "A day will come when you will hear me"; when Cobden, early in his public career, on being told that a given project was impossible, replies, "Then if that is all we

had better set about it at once," we recognise in this glorious optimism of the young one of Nature's great conquering forces. The talks of old age with itself have another significance. They deal not so much with the future as with the past. The possibility of their being enjoyable and satisfying is one of the high rewards of a true life. It argues a certain sort of career behind it when one can say, with Fontenelle, that "old age is the most agreeable period of life, in which our passions are calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambitions satisfied." On the other hand, we cannot imagine a worse fate than to be shut up in the later years, to the voices from a vicious and futile past. The ghosts of a man's evil deeds make sorry table companions. Their talk is horrible, and he cannot get away from it.



## XV.

### In Search of One's Self.

IN the detective stories which have such vogue in the present day the interest lies in the hunt which one man is making after some other man. There is, however, in human life a chase frequently going on in which the complications are vastly subtler, and the psychological interest far deeper than anything which the Sherlock Holmes order of fiction presents. It is the hunt of man after himself. And what we mean by this has nothing to do with the metaphysical puzzle so amusingly presented in "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," in which every one of us is proved to be half-a-dozen different people; nor yet with that simpler distinction of the personality from the bodily life which Socrates suggests when, in "The Phædo," in answer to Crito's question, "How shall we bury you?" he says, "in any way you like; but

you must first get hold of me, and take care that I do not run away from you." The topic to be dealt with here has a more immediate and urgent bearing than these upon practical life. Briefly stated, it is contained in the fact that there are, in the lives of most men, periods of consciousness in which they realise themselves as at their fullest and highest; when the possibilities in them of feeling and of faculty are at their greatest expansion; moments when they can say, "this is my best and truest self"; and in the further fact that this consciousness is retained by few through any lengthened period without interruption. With multitudes there are wide intervening gaps of life, through which the soul wearily trudges, in search of its lost power, its lost feeling. The spectacle they present is one than which the world offers none more pathetic, none more widely suggestive.

It is possible that some reading so far will say, that in thus stating the theme we are giving it a too restricted range. For, they may urge, does not the deepest significance in

the search for one's self lie in the fact that what we here seek we never really find? In a sense that is true. When Goethe says that in youth "our wishes are presentiments of the capabilities which lie within us and the harbingers of that which we shall be afterwards in a condition to perform," he is only giving half of the fact. The other half is that a good part of the self which the youth dreams of and seeks to realise will never be reached by him, and for the reason that it forms part of that human idea which is in the race, and which it will take ages for it, as a race, to grow up to.

Restricting ourselves however, of purpose, to that self which a man does actually realise and is continually losing, let us see what the theme in that aspect of it, has to offer in the way of practical suggestion. On the side to begin with, of his intellectual possibilities, a man has at times the strangest lapses from his true self. We are not speaking here of those caused by the irremediable ravages of disease and old age; such, for instance, as brought

Newton into a condition in which he could not understand his own "Principia." For men in their prime are only occasionally themselves. Whatever we mean by inspiration as related to prophets and apostles, the poet, the orator and the singer of to-day know what they mean by it, and that its presence or absence, both of which they are continually experiencing, makes all the difference to the quality of their work. In the "Buch der Lieder" Heine has an exquisite lyric of an awkward, listless and solitary wight, who suddenly becomes transfigured into nobleness and strength by the approach of his lady love. When she disappears he sinks back again to his old proportions. It is an allegory of the poet's personality before and after the visit of his muse. The men who in every age have thrilled their fellows, have always been conscious that in their best efforts they were not so much the originators, as the channels of a force flowing through them, they knew not whence.

But whatever be the undiscovered mystery at the back of prophetic, artistic or poetic creation,

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what is certain is that, as a condition of it, a man must cultivate as best he can both his bodily and mental health. The preacher or writer who finds his true vision gone and morbid hypochondriacisms taking its place had better cease utterance and take to digging. Old Tauler, the famous mediæval preacher, who was silent for two years and then began again with a new flow of power, is an excellent precedent for temporarily worn-out pulpits. Let the exhausted prophet be silent, and resolutely dig, until at length he once more disinters his buried self. It is wonderful, after a season in which we have endured this loss, in what odd corners we find again our treasure. Many an Alpine tourist, who, with shattered nerve and a drained vitality, has wandered listlessly through the noblest scenery, at length with unspeakable joy has caught a glimpse of something compared with which the grandeurs of a Jungfrau, or a Matterhorn, are as naught. It is the view of his real self, dawning again upon his consciousness, with the old vigours and the old enthusiasms. That is the finest prospect in

the world, though not mentioned, we believe, in either Murray or Baedeker.

In this search for one's self, on its intellectual and creative side, there is another point worth noting. In the formation of every true artist, poet, writer or preacher a preliminary process, of varying lengths, is commonly gone through before the man is in a condition to offer anything really serviceable to the world. It is that of imitation. The neophyte in every sphere delights in forming himself upon some model or other. In its way, this is not a bad sort of apprenticeship to begin with. But mediocrities not only begin here, but here they end. The man, however, who has a genuine message for his fellows will arrive some day at the consciousness that his mind is a medium through which the light of the universe, as it streams in, is refracted at a special angle of its own, and that his work is to paint, sing, write, or speak of things as they appear in that distinctive light. It is this personal equation, this touch of individuality, whether it appear in a sunset by Turner, a movement by Bee-

thoven, an essay by Charles Lamb, or a sermon by Phillips Brooks, that gives the production its charm. Each soul God creates has its own flavour, and we want to taste that flavour. When the young worker has learned precisely what he is as distinguished from others, and gives us that, in whatever limited quantity, or sphere of operation, he becomes valuable. When he has found himself, he will find his world.

We can touch only in the briefest possible way that part of the subject where the soundings are deepest. On their moral and spiritual side men go often in search of a lost self, and it is here that the pursuit takes on its strangest and most tragic forms. On the best and most religious natures the march of the years inflicts some sense of loss. The rapture and ecstasy of the religious feeling which in earlier years, at some sweet strain or moving utterance, or untraced breath of the Spirit, made highest heaven in the soul, is, with many, a faculty which becomes in a measure blunted by time. But when, as is the



case with true hearts, this blossom and bloom of the religious life have been succeeded by the fruit of a strong endurance, of an unfailing sense of duty, of a rooted faith, and an ever widening sympathy, the gain is greater than the loss. The tragedy is not here. It is when men who, in their youth, have looked on God and His world through the eyes of purity, who have known what it was to feel the passion for righteousness, and the supreme gladness of being counted worthy to fight on the side of whatsoever is good, and who in some fatal hour have slipped away from all this, and then from the bottom of the precipice where the best in them went to wreck, gaze back to the far off inaccessible heights of that paradise they lost—here it is we have what may truly be called the tragedy of a soul. The man who has gazed into the depths of that experience will never scoff at the doctrine of a Redemption and a Redeemer.

## XVI.

### Our Possible Self.

It was a favourite dictum of Schopenhauer that man can never be happy from the simple fact that, while he is of necessity some one thing, he has in him the idea and the desire of being a thousand other things. What a world, in which poverty is haunted with the thought of the riches it would so enjoy; where decrepitude muses on the youth and strength that lie out of its reach; where the linen-draper's assistant, chained to his counter, is tormented with the aspirations of a poet; where the dweller in the cold and misty North yearns for those lands of the sun of which he reads, but may never see! Certainly when one holds a brief for Pessimism there is no difficulty in making out a case. Whether it is a good one is another question. For ourselves we do not believe in the conclusion to which facts of this order are supposed to point. Of this

more anon. Meanwhile, the study of that part of us which belongs, so far, only to the possible and the unrealised, has, apart from theories, some peculiar interests of its own.

It is, indeed, a strange and portentous position this of ours in the world, with commonly one *rôle* in life to play, and a thousand in our *répertoire* unused. Every individual of us feels in him the germs of all that humanity has done and been. Fortune has made us a governess or a Custom House clerk. We should be quite at home as a duchess or a millionaire. The working faculties which gain our bread-and-butter form only a small part of our potential equipment. We are the raw material of the artist, the poet, the orator, the statesman, though we shall probably never be known by those names. Three parts of us seem to lie idle. We work the surface ores, believing all the while that rich lodes lie beneath that are never got at. Modern tendencies, too, bind upon us our limitations more closely than ever. It is an

age of specialisation, in which a man gains his living by making, not a pin, but the head of a pin. The feat of being absolutely first in half-a-dozen different things, accomplished by a Michael Angelo and a Da Vinci, become less and less possible, not merely from the rarity of faculties of this order, but from the immensely increased range of the subjects themselves. The hills of knowledge which our fathers climbed in succession, have swollen to great peaks, each of which takes a lifetime to ascend.

It is, in this connection, curious, and in a way pathetic, to note the efforts which people often make to escape their one appropriate *rôle*. Nothing is commoner than for men of distinction to think lightly of the faculty in which their true strength lies, and to seek for glory in parts where they are really weak. Goethe was prouder of his botanical researches and his theory of colours than of "Faust." Sir Walter Scott thought little of being the author of "Waverley," and much of being a Scottish laird. The world

was wiser than these wise men. It found out speedily, what they never did all their lives, that theories of colours and Scottish lairds were dirt cheap, while a Faust and a Waverley were jewels of price.

The reflection that might seem to follow from this, that time spent in pursuits which do not call out our highest faculty is, therefore, time wasted, would, however, be far from correct. While the thing we can do best should be our life business, we owe it to our weaker self to work it for all it is worth if only to make it stronger. Besides, our highest faculty needs the repose it gets when we are using the lower. And is it not true that much of the enjoyment of life issues from pursuits in which we have no chance of pre-eminence? Professor Max Müller has just been surprising the world with his poetical and musical reminiscences. How poor comparatively would life have been to him without music and poetry! Yet the world will never remember him as musician or as poet. Moreover, by luring us on to the pursuit of things in which we shall ourselves never excel,

nature often prepares for the son or grandson who will shine in them. The obscure horn-player of a strolling orchestra in this way gives us a Rossini; an old organist of Eisenach, mediocre himself, makes possible a Sebastian Bach; Margaret Ogilvie, nourishing in humble fashion her love of literature, has for son a J. M. Barrie, who adorns it. Sometimes, too, it happens that the by-pursuits of a good man, nine-tenths of which are of little importance outside his own life, secure a great reward in the fortune of the remaining tenth. Next to the duties of his sacred vocation there was to Bishop Ken nothing, perhaps, quite so absorbing as poetry. One wonders how many hours of that noble life were spent in the writing of his "Edmund," his "Hymnotheo," his "Damorel and Dorilla?" Who nowadays reads them? Was, then, the time wasted? Before we say so we have to remember that this sub-faculty of his, working so often to small result, produced in a happy moment the Morning and the Evening Hymn, compositions which have made his name immortal, and have become

an integral part of the worship of the English-speaking race.

It is time now, perhaps, to come back to the consideration of our possible, or, perhaps, rather our conceivable life as related to our actual, in its bearing on happiness and well-being. Are we, after all, shut up to Schopenhauer's conclusion that the power of imagining himself a thousand other things than what he is makes not for a man's weal, but for his woe? Let the man who professes to believe this ask himself whether he would really prefer to do without an imagination? Aspiration and desire bring undoubtedly their pains, but then they are growing pains, and entirely healthy. The yearning after the unattained is the motor power of humanity, forcing it onward to the fulfilment of its high destiny. The unrealised in human thought is a sure prophecy of what is yet to be. The word of Goethe, which seems, perhaps, too sanguine for the individual, at least in this life, is not too much for humanity as a whole. "Our wishes are presentiments of the capabilities that lie within us, and harbin-



gers of that which we shall be in a condition to perform."

Apart from this, the dream side of life, the side of its unrealised imaginings, has, with healthy natures, an enormous balance of pleasure over pain. That a weaver can conceive of himself as a duke, without any chance of being one, is assuredly the reverse of a hardship. The hardship would come in if he were condemned to be a weaver all over, with no power of looking beyond his loom. There are men, indeed, who do little else but dream, and they enjoy life as well as most. They get often more out of their imaginary rôles than the people who really play them. Mr. Casaubon never wrote his great book, but the thought of it was his daily meat and drink. The barber who dreamed every night that he was a king had very likely a better time of it than his majesty.

This power of enjoying life possibilities which we are never likely to realise, whether it come to us by gift of temperament or by spiritual grace, is assuredly a great possession.

Not less is the faculty of contemplating without bitterness the departure into dreamland of what once was actual. To gain that is the problem of old age. History records on this point some of its most melancholy failures. What a wail is that of the old Greek Mimnermus: "When once the appointed time of youth is past it is better to die forthwith than to live!" How wholesome compared with such a whine is the word of Marcus Aurelius: "Your way is, therefore, to manage this minute [of life] wisely, to part with it cheerfully; and like a ripe nut, when you drop out of the husk, be sure to speak well of the season and make your acknowledgments to the tree that bore you!" That is good, but Christianity gives us something better. For it deepens in us, as time streams on, the feeling, not only that the life we have had here has been essentially good, a boon for which to be thankful, but that its unrealised possibilities are prophecies of a higher condition beyond, where they shall have undreamed-of fulfilments.

## XVII.

### Negative Capability.

WE borrow the phrase from Keats, who used it to express what seemed to him an important condition of literary achievement. He was, perhaps, himself the most striking example of what he meant. He produced his wonderful results by an extraordinary feat of detachment. In a period of depression and disillusionment, when the miserable outcome of the French Revolution had destroyed, in some of the finest spirits, almost all hope for humanity, Keats found a way of escape by quietly turning his back on all the problems which confounded his contemporaries, and satisfying himself with an ideal world, summoned from the past, and filled with images of immortal beauty. He eluded the hard facts which weighed on other thinkers by the "negative capability" of ignoring them. He did his work by shutting his eyes to a reality that looked so hope-

less, and creating in its place a sunnier realm of his own.

It would not do, in literature or in any other pursuit, for every one to exercise the same capacity in the same degree. Since Keats's time the real has indeed asserted itself again with a vengeance. Nevertheless, it remains that in all spheres his "negative capability," the faculty of not seeing and not feeling on occasion, forms an indispensable feature of a life equipment. The cultivation of it is, to an extent which we perhaps have scarcely been accustomed to recognise, necessary both to high achievement and to real enjoyment. Illustrations of this may be found in some widely differing directions.

It is to be observed at the outset that there is a negative capability produced by training, and another which is native and inborn. The latter may seem at first sight a pure limitation, but it plays a *rôle* of the highest importance in the field of affairs. Nature gets an immense deal out of men by their sheer ignorance and want of perception. There are some things

they do blindfold, or they would never do them at all. Rudyard Kipling gives a good example of what we mean in that wonderful achievement of Thomas Atkins, "The Taking of Lungtungpen." Mulvaney, commenting on the exploit, says: "'Tis the bhoys—the raw bhoys—that don't know fwhat a bullut manes, an' wud'nt care av they did—that dhu the work. . . . Wud fifty seasoned sodgers have taken Lungtungpen in the dhark that way? No! They'd know the risk av fever and chill. Let alone the shootin'. . . . But the three-year-olds know little an' care less; an' where there's no fear, there's no danger." Precisely. The world is full of Lungtungpens, which Nature sets her recruits to capture. Older birds would not do here. They see too much. Their cultivated appreciation of consequences forms a real incapacity for some things which have to be done if the world is to be kept moving.

In regions of things sufficiently remote from the British soldier and his doings we may see precisely the same principle at work. There are, for instance, in the moral and religious

sphere examples of the way in which a sheer ignorance of what we now regard as eminently well worth knowing, has helped in realising wonderful spiritual results. Take the case of the asceticism, the monkish austerities of the mediæval Church. When we read of Bernard, in his novitiate and afterwards, carrying through a process of starving, of vigil, of flagellation, which absolutely ruined his health and reduced him to all his after work under the conditions of a deplorable invalidism, we wonder at his folly. The pity of it! That a man, longing to serve his God and his fellows, should begin by crippling in this way all his powers of serving! But there is another side to the matter. The man who, to the immeasurable benefit of Christendom, wielded over it for a whole generation an almost absolute authority, to whom kings, popes, and emperors turned as to an oracle, gained this authority by virtue of a saintship which, with the ideas of that age, would certainly not have been ascribed to him apart from his self-imposed rigours. What a picture of power, in its most divine and beneficent form,

is that which one of his biographers draws for us in this sentence: "The man on whom the eyes of the Church had long been fixed, on whose forehead beamed the halo of sanctity, and who at Rome as well as in France, was venerated as the oracle of God and the tutelary spirit of the age; the presence of that man could not be dispensed with." With our modern ideas of the cult of the body he would certainly not have wrecked his constitution for a religious idea. No. And he would not have been the Bernard who made popes, preached a crusade, ruled the spirit of princes, and inspired the world.

While in the region of Church history one is tempted to clench the principle we are illustrating by citing an exactly opposite instance. Again it is a Frenchman. If it was one-sidedness which, in the twelfth century, made Bernard, it was the lack of it which, in the nineteenth, ruined Lamennais. Was there ever a greater inward and outward tragedy than that represented by the simple successive publication, on the part of the same man, of



two books? In the "Essai sur l'Indifférence" Lamennais offered an argument for Catholicism and Infallibility, which was felt to have rehabilitated the Roman system, and which brought Pope and Cardinals to the feet of its splendidly gifted author. The highest ecclesiastical honours were within his reach—if only he could keep steadily looking one way. But that was exactly what he was incapable of doing. The other side would assert itself, looming ever bigger and bigger, fascinating his gaze until it had mastered him, and we get finally in the "Paroles" the utterances of the religious revolutionary who has shaken from him the system of which he had been counted the invincible defender. His ecclesiastical career was ruined because he had not the power, the "negative capability," of shutting one eye.

We have left ourselves only a short space for the discussion of what is, perhaps, the most important side of this topic, the negative capability which is the result of practice and discipline. Some of the

best results of life come from the cultivated power of not seeing and of not feeling. In mental matters, for instance, every student knows that half the battle of successful thinking lies in his faculty of abstraction. He must become blind and deaf to a hundred things that assail his attention before he can make headway with the one thing he would investigate.

Important in the intellectual, this faculty becomes absolutely indispensable in the social and domestic spheres. Where husbands and wives remain lovers through life, their conjugal good fortune owes much to a cultivated and happy blindness on both sides. There are faults in plenty for the seeing, but they look the other way. Peace between mistress and servants depends also largely on the faculty the former possesses of shutting her eyes, or, at least, of winking hard on occasion. Worthy to be praised, to be compared indeed with the wise woman of the Proverbs, is she who, loving cleanliness, does nevertheless not upset the peace of a houseful of people because a

speck of dust, yea, peradventure six specks, have been found in the wrong place.

A like negative capability is invaluable in our general social intercourse. There is amongst English people a curious shyness and reserve in regard to strangers—the feeling that led an acute foreign observer to remark that not only is England an island but every Englishman is an island—and this, if not taken at its true estimate, leads to the strangest misunderstandings. The man who makes headway socially amongst us is he who ignores the surface frost and makes straight for the warmth that lies below. The outstanding illustration of this is Boswell. We do not propose him as an example, but it is certain we owe the immortal biography to the happy insensibility of its author to the mental kicks and cuffs with which his acquaintance with Johnson commenced. He had faith, the strange little man, that the great heart under the bear's skin could be won if he only tried long enough, and faith had its full reward. If we win friendship by being a little blind we keep it, too, on the same

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terms. The secret of happiness in human relations is the steady cult of the good points in our loved ones and the systematised atrophy, in relation to them, of our critical powers. It is only in our Divine relationships that we can turn the fullest gaze upon the Object of our love and be content.

## XVIII.

### Imagination in Religion.

WE shall have got rid of a good many of our inward confusions when we have settled two questions—first, the part which imagination has played in the building up of our religious ideas, and secondly, the part which it ought to play. That imagination, the power of *imaging*, what the Germans call *Einbildungskraft*, or the picturing faculty, has been and is an enormously potent factor in religion goes without saying. Our religious vocabulary, to begin with, consists almost entirely of images. It is a set of concepts borrowed from the region of the material and the visible to set forth the invisible and the spiritual. These at the best are but rough instruments for getting at truth. It does not require the arguments of a Kant or a Ritschl to make us realise the shakiness of the ground we are on when we take these

images as at all adequately or accurately representing the real and innermost fact of things. But our difficulties are enormously increased when we come to the actual content of religion as it has been handed down to us, and are confronted with the question, What of this represents history and reality, and what of it is picture and dream?

In this matter the East and the West have a very heavy and complicated account to settle with each other. Our religion has come to us from the East, and we are now slowly beginning to understand that the Eastern religious imagination has been very much like the Eastern jungle in the prodigal fecundity and wildly fantastic character of its growths and has to be dealt with by us accordingly.

Before going further, however, let us guard against being misunderstood. It must not for a moment be supposed that we are running a tilt against imagination in religion, as though it were an element that needed to be eliminated, or indeed that could be dispensed with. The most cursory glance round is suffi-

cient to show how essential it is, and must ever be, to man's spiritual developement. In China Confucius endeavoured to do without it, and leaving the unseen world out of account, to build up a religious system from plain, workaday moral maxims. But even amongst that most matter-of-fact people the imagination demanded its rights, and to-day the average Chinaman is at once Confucianist, Taouist and Buddhist, the first system giving him his morals, and the two last his views of the unseen powers.

Amongst ourselves, with the cultured as well as the uncultured, the imagination is amongst the most hard-worked of the religious faculties. No one can successfully teach children without a constant appeal to it. Adults are in this matter but children of a larger growth. The most powerful preachers are the men of high imagination who can at the same time play most effectively on this faculty in their hearers. Massillon, making the courtiers of Louis XIV. leap to their feet under the idea that the judgment day was actually



upon them, and William Dawson, the Methodist preacher, turning the eyes of his audience to the door, where they expected to see the prodigal son whom he had pictured, coming in on his way from the far country, are types of the men who have been most successful in winning their fellows to the religious life. We all of us know that the "Pilgrim's Progress" is not history; that Doubting Castle and the Delectable Mountains are nowhere on the map; that Mr. Greatheart and Old Honest are children of a dreamer's brain. But learned and ignorant alike have recognised here religious teaching of the first order, a teaching which, under the forms of the imagination, offers truths which feed the inmost life of the soul.

It is not, then, in the use of the imagination in religion taken by itself, that the West of to-day has found its difficulty in settling its account with the East. Where the crux comes in has been in the boundless luxuriance of the Oriental fancy, coupled with, to us, an exasperating neglect to discriminate between its own domain and that of historical and scientific

fact. We have no difficulty with "Pilgrim's Progress," because we know where to look for the truth that is in it, and what to put down to imagination. It has not been so with the Bible and Christianity.

The West has suffered, and is still suffering, incredible mental confusions and miseries from having made the mistake of taking the Oriental Bunyans and Miltons literally. It is, for instance, only just dawning upon us that the Bible story of Creation is not history, but, as Professor Ryle puts it, the Hebrew version of one of the primitive legends common to the Semitic race. When people hear the Commandments recited in church numbers of them believe that the preamble, "And God spake all these words saying," represents an actual articulate utterance made to Moses from the Unseen. It is hard for them to understand that man, including, of course, woman, has had all the talking on this planet, and that the universe, which does everything, says nothing. And where historical fact is dealt with in the Bible it is extremely difficult for the popular

mind, educated as it has been, to comprehend that in the majority of instances what is offered us is fact plus the Oriental imagination. The problem of the Christian origins is, for instance, to those who have really faced it, enormously complicated by the remembrance that for thirty years after Christ's death, so far as we can trace, no written record of His life or teachings existed. When the great Life did get at last into ink and upon paper it was under the influence of ideas and thought-forms which the unfortunate Western mind, with its canons of historical composition, has to do what it can with.

One of the ways in which the East has most effectually puzzled the West has been in its symbolism. No more singular fate has ever overtaken imaginative compositions than that which has caused such works as the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse to be regarded by multitudes as authoritative statements of a world-history which is yet to be made. The remedy we should prescribe for notions of this kind is to read the whole of the literature of

which these books are specimens. No one is in a position to arrive at a sane appreciation of Daniel and Revelation who does not know such works as the Apocalypse of Baruch, the Assumption of Moses, the Book of Enoch, and the other examples of this school. Here we may match vials, trumpets, seals, and many-headed beasts with the vine of a thousand branches, the twelve floods, and the eagle with twelve wings and three heads. After reading them all we shall probably realise that a symbolism which suited the mental methods of a period that has passed away is only of minor significance to us, and that it is elsewhere than in their numbers and in their imagery that Daniel and the Apocalypse contain a message for our time.

But if the creative and visualising faculty by its reckless and unguarded use in former times has brought so much of confusion into religion, it is to the same faculty, disciplined and scientifically directed, that we shall have to look largely for the remedy. It is the untrained imagination which, in the childhood of the

race, has mingled fact and truth with myth and legend. It will be the modern historic imagination that, realising to itself the exact mental conditions under which this early work was done, will know how to disengage the essence from the form, and the substratum of fact from the fancies that have been made to overlie it.

Raised by culture to its proper power and true function, the imagination will, then, still stand as one of the essential elements and prime forces of the inner life. Having purified the history of religion and rectified its attitude towards the universe, it will have in the new conditions freer play than ever for its sublime and spiritualising energy. History it will still find to be full of inspiration and of revelation, and the universe full of God. It will, with clarified vision, behold the kingdom of heaven coming amongst men; will see that the earth is saturated with spirit; and will give its assured affirmative to Milton's prophetic surmise:—

What if earth  
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein  
Each to the other like?

## XIX.

### Morality and the Clock.

THE man who invented the first timekeeper has never been canonised, and most likely his life was not saintly. For all that he was a great ethical authority. His influence upon morals has been immense. His advent marked the rise of a whole department of "virtues and their contrary vices." The people who lived before his day had an easy-going relation to the hours which would be regarded as scandalous now. We have been caught and tamed, and our master is the clock. This pontiff of bronze has reduced us, body, soul and spirit, to a subjection which is almost abject. Modern religious life, for instance, is under its absolute control. The reach of its finger to a point on the dial tells the Church when its worship is to begin. As peremptory is its intimation to officiating clergy when to end.

Christendom, divided on a thousand points, is united on this, that its ministry shall obey the clock. That they are too high, or too low, or too broad is as dust in the balance compared with the offence of being too long.

This religious domination of the timepiece is not confined either to Sundays and church service. It is the central element of not a few notable schemes for the religious conduct of life. Monasticism is expressly modelled upon it. The High Church William Law, in his "Serious Call to a Devout Life," tells his readers what to do when the clock strikes nine and eleven, and three and six. Wesley, a sometime follower of Law, earned for himself and his little circle at Oxford the name Methodists for a similar scheme, the title flung at them in derision being originally that of a Roman philosophical sect who lived by rule and line. Every religious body, in fact, has had its devout men and women whose endeavour to make the best of life, in the spiritual sense, has taken the form of a daily programme which assigns its occupation to each hour.



The commercial world, whose ethical code, generally speaking, is not too strictly modelled on that of the Church, is one with it in the recognition of the clock. As the Decalogue in the New Testament is summed up in two comprehensive principles, so, in the opinion of many, the code of commerce lies in the two aphorisms—"time is money" and "punctuality is the soul of business." The modern *employé* has his whole life ruled by a mechanical deity, placed high in front of warehouse or factory, whose brazen finger dividing the minutes, and deep tongue tolling the hours, tell him when he shall work and rest, when he shall eat and drink, when he shall sleep and wake.

The rule of the clock is undoubtedly absolute in modern life. Is it beneficent as well? If we give an affirmative reply, it has to be at least with some reserves. That the noting of the hours, in awakening a sense of their value, has been an enormous factor in human progress can hardly be denied. The clock awoke humanity to realise that time was—*pace* philosopher Kant—an objective fact, and that

at the same time it was a gold-mine. Since the discovery, the human output from it has been, it must be admitted, by no means contemptible. From counting the hours men have come to squeeze them, and to make their palpitating minutes yield, as they fly, ever more varied forms of activity, ever more complex phases of consciousness. The West, in learning this lesson, has outstripped the drowsy East, and made "better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."


The system, however, has its drawbacks. It has not been proved yet that the final end of the soul was that it may keep time to the swing of the pendulum. The moralist, watching the operation, in different departments of life, of the clock system of morals finds himself inclined to ask whether it will not result in turning men into machines, and in extinguishing their *rôle* as creators. It seems, for one thing, to leave no place for the dreamer. Schiller, when he wrote his poem on the partition of the earth, in which he complains that the priest, the soldier and the trader had taken their shares

and left nothing for the poet, was feeling the stress of this system. All the dreamers, in fact, have felt it. It was under this duress that Thoreau wrote: "I cannot easily buy a blank book to write thoughts in; they are commonly ruled for dollars and cents." And his further sentiment, "If I sell both my forenoons and my afternoons to society, as most appear to do, I am sure that for me there would be nothing left worth living for," was regarded by his punctual timekeeping fellow-citizens as the utterance of an impracticable idler. Yet some of us think that one Thoreau was worth fifty punctual makers of dollars and cents.

The clock morality is, in fact, dangerous in so far as it makes men think that activity and regularity are enough of themselves to save their souls alive. There are models of both these virtues who, by the time they are half through, may be said to have no souls left to save. The busy *bourgeoisie* of Athens got rid of Socrates because they felt there was no room amongst them for a man whose boast was "for

I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons and properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul." Such a sentiment was altogether intolerable to the clock morality.

The rule of thumb system is excellent for supplying the world with its calico and its book-keeping. But its great spiritual inheritance did not come to it that way. The clock *régime* could never produce a Midsummer Night's Dream. It could never have founded the Christian Church. The greatest enrichments of humanity have reached it by methods entirely independent of the method of "so much output per hour." The name cut deepest in human history is that of One who lived some thirty years in absolute obscurity, whose public life was compressed into a number of months, and whose published utterances can be read in an hour or so. Neither that life, nor the death in which it culminated, can by any ingenuity be used as an illustration of the clock method of to-day. Yet in that life and death the world finds still the



fount of energy which keeps its spiritual self alive.

The sum of all this is that the timepiece, though an excellent helper in morals, is hardly fitted to be their sole arbiter. Over a large area of life it rules with a really beneficent sway. There could be no greater blunder than to attempt to bring under it the remainder. In business and in religion activity and regularity are excellent things, but they are not the whole, nor even the highest. There is something better than performance, and that is character. There is something more important than quantity of output, and that is quality. It may indeed be well worth considering whether the rule of the clock might not be with profit relaxed in many directions where it now reigns, and whether the ceaseless rush to capture the minutes and the hours, which is the note to-day of our Western world, is after all the surest way of realising that "Licht, Liebe, Leben," which Herder had placed on his tomb as the expression of the highest human ideal.

## XX.

### The Religiously Ungifted.

THE phrase "religious disabilities" is to English ears one of familiar and somewhat ugly import. Its ordinary associations are with bygone Test and Corporation Acts, with exclusion of non-Anglicans from the Universities, and other sordid features of our sectarian strife. There is, however, a class of religious disabilities of quite a different order, and which merit more attention than they have hitherto had. These relate not to the strife of parties so much as to men's own nature and environment. They are disabilities not of law but of brain and heart. Types of men are around us who, as compared with their fellows, can perhaps best be described as the religiously ungifted. They lack a sense of things in this direction just as others lack the feeling for music or art. This fact has been strangely misinter-

preted, and has led to the gravest mistakes about human nature. It has been seized on by sectarians as the mark between elect and non-elect, as showing the dividing line between nature and grace. The blunder was, perhaps, excusable in earlier times, but we can now take a saner estimate of matters. The wider survey of to-day shows us that the distinction in this respect between man and man, instead of marking a gulf between them, is a proof of their essential solidarity. Its proper lesson lies in a deepening of sympathy arising from a sense of mutual dependence.

Before coming to this, however, it may here be noted that there is a wide sense in which our whole race is, as compared with what the future may have in store, at present religiously ungifted. The difference between the high prophetic natures of the world and the dullards who live by their lowest instincts may not be greater than that between what man spiritually is now and what he will hereafter become. Our present senses and perceptions are so many windows through which we look out upon and



interpret the universe. Who knows that humanity as it develops will not open out new ones, affording entirely fresh views? The world's history so far has been that of the steady inflow of spirit, lifting the organisms through which it works to ever higher levels, and attuning them to finer perceptions. There is no evidence that this process has ceased or will cease. If evolution has brought us from "the ape and tiger" stage to where we are, why may it not bring us to a position where our footing in the spiritual world shall be as sure, and our outlook as wide, as now the one is uncertain and the other limited?

A conviction of this sort seems specially appropriate to a time like our own. Our age, as compared with some others, may be itself described as a religiously ungifted one. The cultivated man of to-day is

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born.

Multitudes of earnest thinkers are in the state described by Clough's melancholy lines:

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Eat, drink and die, for we are souls bereaved :  
Of all the creatures under heaven's wide cope  
We are most hopeless, who had once most hope,  
And most beliefless that had most believed.

If, indeed, one were to take the current literatures of France, Germany, Italy and Scandinavia as indicating the opinion on this subject of the most educated classes of the modern world, one would say that religion, in the old sense, had almost died out of cultivated Europe. The condition is, however, we are firmly convinced, one of temporary eclipse only, and not of extinction. Religion is not dead, but hibernating as preparatory to a new metamorphosis. Our race is on the way, through a somewhat bleak transition stage, to a higher altitude and a more advanced spiritual development, where the secret yearnings of the soul, at present so feebly supported by reason, shall find as clear a scientific sanction as they will a full inward realisation.

Coming now to the more individual aspects of the topic, we note first that men are gifted in the most varying degrees with the faculty of religious perception. There are people born

with the prophetic instinct. From childhood they dream dreams and see visions. They have a sense for the unseen as distinct and special as had Newton for mathematics and Mozart for music. Their nature inwardly and instinctively thrills to everything relating to the ideal, the mystic, the suprasensuous. Connected with this faculty of perception there is usually an exquisite susceptibility to religious feeling. A strain of music, a function of worship, an eloquent appeal, a view from a mountain height, will produce in such a mind an inner rapture which cannot be expressed in words. It seems natural to think of characters of this kind as specially the beloved of heaven. Let us make no mistake. As a matter of fact our seer is usually a very defective personage, and if the world were peopled exclusively with his type it would be very much poorer than it is. The seer's neighbour, who is nothing if not practical, who is designing bridges or inventing locomotives, while the other is questioning his soul, is the prophet's necessary counterpoise and makeweight.

To put one of these up and the other down on the scale of moral worth; to declare that the ideality of the one is religion, and the homely practicality of the other a kind of worldliness, is a blunder which the world has in past times made often enough, but which is hardly now excusable. Who has not known the man of extreme devotional susceptibility, of fluent and impressive religious utterance, who has been as weak in other important points of character as he is strong in these! Such are as a rule kept going in the world, and helped to bear a useful part in it, by the presence at their side of men who cannot put two words together, whose minds are bare of religious imagination, but who cordially appreciate in others what they do not themselves possess, and whomake up the lack in the idealist temperament by solid qualities of another kind. It is by this distribution of the common spiritual heritage over different individualities, each possessing a part of the whole, and finding in his neighbour that which is necessary to his own completeness, that men realise their essential

oneness, as belonging each to the other, and all to God.

It must not be overlooked that a man's spiritual gifts lie in his environment as well as in himself. We become, as Kant has taught us, only properly aware of ourselves by the impact upon us of the outside world. And one may well deplore here the case of those religiously ungifted, who never in their history have had the inspiration of contact with a great spiritual personality, or whose career has led them away from the accustomed sources of religious life. Our Anglo-Saxon race, wandering from its home to every corner of the world, has fared strangely in this matter. Ruling in the East over subject races, and struggling in the far West and in the Southern seas against primitive nature, it has on these missions, with a singular spiritual recklessness, begun by shutting itself off from its old moral conditions. The nabob of a century ago was commonly reported as dropping his religion at the Cape, to pick it up again on his return journey. The early Californian and Australian

mining camps observed Sunday by orgies of whisky and cards. But in the Anglo-Saxon the spiritual, however at times it may seem to go under, invariably re-asserts itself. The Anglo-Indian of to-day is a reputable and church-going character, and San Francisco is now one of the best steeples of cities. The story, indeed, of what has been done, amid the wildest communities, to re-awaken in men a feeling after their lost spiritual inheritance, makes it practically certain that well-directed effort will have results equally successful with the most neglected classes at home or abroad. As the Æolian harp vibrates to the wind, so does the heart of man everywhere to the true message of God.

A word, perhaps, in closing is needed to secure that some of the foregoing is not misunderstood. What has been said of the differences in men's natural religious capacity must not be taken as implying that, in our view, such differences are matters purely of temperament, lying apart from a man's own will and moral striving. As a matter of fact they are, at every

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point, allied to character. On the one hand, a man of rich inner faculty may, by indifference, by moral obliquity, by breaking with the conditions of its health and growth, starve or destroy it. On the other hand, a nature which for years has shown no religious aptitude will, by the simple process of placing itself in the spiritual current, and by yielding to the central demands of the Divine life, discover in itself new and ever-growing potencies of emotion and delight. It is for each man, in fact, to sedulously cultivate his own weak side. Let the idealist take constant lessons in the practical, and reverence the masters in that sphere. And let him whose faculty is mainly in the region of the seen and the solid understand that above all this stretches a realm impalpable but most real, the kingdom of the Spirit, man's true home, whence come to him his highest glory, and his purest joy.



## XXI.

### Fog in Theology.

DESPITE the broadening light, heavy mist still hangs over portions of the theological field. In no corner of it is the fog denser than that where lie the questions relating to knowledge and revelation. Examples are continually occurring of experienced theologians entering this region to flounder hopelessly in its opaque atmosphere, involving themselves and their followers in dire confusions and contradictions. The time has surely arrived when it is proper to ask whether this fog is natural and inevitable, or whether it may not be an artificial production, capable of being dissipated, to the great advantage of all concerned.

Dropping metaphor, and coming to the plain facts of the case, what we find is that religious thinkers of various sects and schools agree to regard the doctrines of the Bible as having

reached man by a special route, a fact which is supposed to invest them with a peculiar authority. We have, accordingly, "the truths of revelation" spoken of as something distinct from so-called secular knowledge, and as occupying consequently a higher plane. These specially-revealed truths are, we are told, found only in the Bible, and they constitute it the Word of God, to which the reason must bow.

At this point comes in, for Protestants at least, contradiction number one. For while on this theory the reason is subordinated to the Scriptures, it is by reason alone that the all-important question as to what is and what is not the Bible has, for them, been decided. The Catholic evades the difficulty by asserting the inspiration and infallibility of the Church Councils which determined the Scripture canon. But this resource is not open to the Protestant. If he speaks of a providential guidance of the mind of the fourth century in this matter, he must accept what follows. For the Divine guidance here accorded to the fourth century cannot with any consistency be refused to the

intellectual movement of the nineteenth. But this admission knocks the first great hole into the theory of a special source for Biblical truth. For it means that we cannot admit Divine inspiration as belonging to one period of human history, without admitting it for all periods.

But we may approach the subject from another standpoint. It is constantly argued that, if the doctrine of a special inspiration of the Scriptures be abandoned, their authority will be lowered. This is another way of saying that a theory of special inspiration is a real buttress to truth. Fortunately, we are able to put this to a simple test. The secular sciences have attained to their present position without any support whatever of this kind. The doctrines on astronomy, geology, biology, and the multitude of other subjects which have entered into the consciousness of the civilised world of to-day have no theory of inspiration to back them. Have they suffered from the want of it? On the contrary, the singular fact is, that while theology, with its inspiration theory, has

suffered a prodigious decline in influence in modern times, the authority of the sciences is at its maximum, and is regarded everywhere as resting on unshakeable foundations. The "Special Source" theory of Scriptural truth certainly does not appear to come out well from the point of view of utility.

The same test will also, happily, avail in another direction. The cry is constantly heard that if, in the study of the Scriptures and of spiritual truth generally, we make the reason our guide and criterion we expose ourselves to endless confusions. What refuge have we from the endless vagaries of the human mind, from the dreams of visionaries, and the rash assertions of the ignorant? If the Bible is a mixture of truth and error, who shall finally show us what to accept and what to reject? How may we decide amid the claims of warring teachers and systems? Surely it is enough to say in answer that precisely the same difficulties lie against the authority of the reason in the sciences to which we have alluded. They, as well as religion, have had to struggle against

every form of ignorance, of delusion, of contradictory opinion. What has, in face of this, secured their advance toward truth and authority? Nothing but the ever-broadening, ever-clarifying consciousness of the race; nothing but the constant action of the common verifying faculty, by which error is in the long run discovered to be error, and is quietly relegated to its place.

But we are told the special source of Scriptural truth, as distinguished from other knowledge, is shown by the testimony of the prophets and apostles, who were its organs. They speak of a Divine action upon their mind, of the truth they uttered coming to them as a "Word of the Lord." In this we believe they spoke truly. Only, they were not alone. When there flashed upon the minds of a Copernicus, of a Kepler, of a Newton, the truths concerning the universe of which they were made the organs to mankind, the conviction was not less clear that what they had seen was, too, a part of the Divine Order, an unveiling of the Divine mind.

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It is time, indeed, that our religious vision took a wider survey. What we plead for is not a levelling down but a levelling up of faith. We need to grasp the all-unifying, all-clarifying idea that knowledge of every kind is nothing less than an impartation to the human consciousness of a portion of that Eternal Reason which is the ground and source of all being. What is the guarantee that any opinion we may hold is true? The answer is in its agreement with facts, as witnessed to by the highest consciousness of the race. The fact that this common consciousness tends in its findings evermore to unity is one of the surest proofs we have that the individual mind derives from, and rests upon, One Universal Mind, in which all truth inheres, and that human progress and enlightenment mean simply the inflowing upon man to an ever-increasing degree of its radiance. The reception of this light is revelation, of which the truth in the Scriptures is one part as the truth of science is another. There is no room for specialising here, and there is no need for it. When theology understands

this, there will be no more building on the boggy acre of Dualism, on which so many rickety structures have hitherto been reared; and religious truth, resting on the same basis as that of science, will receive the same universal acceptance.



## XXII.

### Temperament in Theology.

THE death of Francis W. Newman will to a multitude of minds inevitably recall the vivid contrast between two closely-related careers. The possibilities of divergence in modern theological thinking could hardly be more strikingly illustrated than in the life of the brilliant Theist who has just passed away, as compared with that of his greater brother who died a Roman Cardinal. Born of the same parents, brought up under, and profoundly responsive to, the same Evangelical faith, alike equipped with the highest intellectual powers, unworldly both to the degree of asceticism, these two earnest spirits in their quest for truth arrive, one at the negation of all the distinctively Christian creeds, and the other at the conviction that "the creed is the ingrafted word which is able to save our souls," and that

“a publisher of heresy should be treated as if he were embodied evil.”

This tremendous and, one might say, almost tragic theological antithesis of the two Newmans sets the mind in motion along a good many trails. One of them especially seems worth following for the results it may yield in the interesting, if somewhat obscure, province of thought through which it leads. It is evident that positions so different, arrived at by two men so nearly related, and each so pure and so high-minded, could not be the result of the working of pure rationality. On mathematical subjects they were at one. That they were so at variance in theology shows that in this region another element than reasoning had come into play. What happened in these two instances has been happening over the whole field. The positions arrived at by theologians, the systems they create or support, will never be understood by us until we have gone behind them, and have investigated their actual producing causes. And we shall not be long at work before discovering that pure reasoning

has had only a minor part to play in them. We are specially dealing with theology here; but the fact is that over vast regions of human thought the really controlling power is not evidence, or any logical process relating to it; it is temperament.

In developing their systems men act as trees act in building up their structure. The oak, by its "oak instinct," seeks the outside elements in air, soil and sunlight, which are appropriate to it, and then turns them into its own likeness. The thousand things repugnant to it, or which its assimilatory power does not reach, it leaves alone. In like manner a leading mind, according to its secret affinities, selects out of the infinite array of outside phenomena the things which most strike it and best suit it. It arranges and co-ordinates these materials very much as we see the tree doing. What in the one becomes trunk and branches, becomes in the other an articulated intellectual system. It is full of reasonings, but the reasonings did not make it. They were the retinue and camp followers of the primal

instinct. Schleiermacher's *pectus est quod theologum facit* is true in a wider sense than he intended it. Deep down in the inmost feeling, in that "philosophy of the unconscious," which waits yet to be explored, lies buried the real secret of our theologies.

And this secret of temperament, which compels our reasonings, which creates for each of us in a way a separate universe, and which has really made the creeds, differs so widely in different men. Of few, indeed, can it be said, as Tennyson sang of himself and his friend :—

But thou and I are one in kind  
As moulded like in Nature's mint;  
And hill and wood and field did print  
The same sweet forms in either mind.

What men see depends on the instrument within as much as on the object without, and at present we have no means of bringing the mental object-glasses to a common focus. What is patent to the mystical faculty is invisible to the critical, and *vice versâ*. You cannot yoke a Swedenborg with a Voltaire.

As if to give an object-lesson for all time in

this subjective character of all theologies, we have its most vivid illustration in the very foundation documents of Christianity. A Paul, a John, a James, standing alike in the centre of the Christian movement, in vital and first-hand relation with its transcendent facts and forces, give us each their system of it, and each is an absolutely different one. Christianity is one thing to Paul, another to John, and yet another to James. It is life and power and infinite uplift to each of them, but their separate conception of it as a system introduces us to three distinct thought-worlds.

The same phenomenon has been repeating itself throughout the history of Christianity. Augustine had the same Christian material to go upon as Origen. Very different was the affair they made of it. There seems to be no common denominator between the order of minds, such as that of a Scotus of Erigena and a Zwingli, who both saw nothing in the Eucharist but a commemoration, and that of a Radbertus or a Manning, who found transubstantiation writ large in the New

Testament. How are we to relatively estimate the mental workings of a Calvin and a Rabelais? Both are Frenchmen; they are contemporary ecclesiastics, furnished with all the learning of their time. The same religious facts are within the purview of each. But one emerges with the "Institutes" as his rendering of the account, the other with Pantagruel and the Thelema motto of "*Fais ce que voudras.*"

To suppose that the Church has escaped as to its conclusions from this temperamental factor by its device of General Councils is to any one who has studied their history a vain imagination. The Great Councils have in every instance been examples, not of a community of minds, but of the predominant influence of some one. Nicæa was the reflection of Athanasius; to understand the Tridentine conclusions we need to study the mental history of the Jesuit Lainez, who swayed the assembly irresistibly by his oratory; the last Vatican Council was the triumph of our own Manning. Equally vain is it to expect that

the development of the scientific spirit is going all at once to eliminate the variations in theology arising from the personal factor. A sufficient evidence that this is not the case is furnished by the later developments of the Ritschlian school. That school is now beginning to discover that Ritschl's quarrel with German Pietism was the result of a primal repugnance, instinctive rather than rational, and that this subjective feeling has seriously limited his view in some important directions. One of the most distinguished of his followers, Harnack, has, in a recent German review, expressed this feeling with much plainness.

But it is time to ask what all this amounts to. In the first place, let it be remembered that while human reason, in the strict sense, has played a comparatively subordinate part in the world's doctrinal movement, this does not imply that the movement has been an irrational one. Because those who thought themselves architects turn out to be only day labourers, it does not follow there has been no architect. The signs are becoming



more apparent that the different systems, the result of the varying mentalities that forged them, while not the truth, as their authors fondly imagined, are all being made to serve as means for getting at it. The mystic and the rationalist, the minds inductive and the minds deductive, have been tunnelling through the same mountain, and the work of each will count in the final result.

And despite the difficulties in the way of it, the prospect lies open of an ultimate agreement, in the domain even of the human reason, on the great questions of the spiritual life. There is already an area, small yet growing, of ascertained fact and scientific inference in this region in which the best minds are practically agreed. There is no reason to suppose that this area will not continue to extend. Such a unanimity will be indeed the last result of time; but it is coming, and is worth waiting and working for.

Meantime the wise man will use the systems as his helpers while never allowing them to

become his masters. They have all in them valuable material, which he will appropriate for his own building purposes. He will realise that he lives spiritually, not by them, but by what is behind and beneath them. Life is one thing, the theory of it another. A man may be perfectly healthy with a hopelessly wrong doctrine of nutrition, or without any doctrine at all. New Testament Christianity, offering him on the part of its most prominent leaders three or four separate theories, and showing the Christ living in and ennobling them all, gives him an all sufficing lesson as to the relative value of theory and fact. He will strive ever for a coherent system, but will realise that the root of the matter lies not there, but in the Eternal Life in him which the theory seeks to express.

Our little systems have their day,  
The have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights from Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

## XXIII.

### On Accepting Ourselves.

THE end of the year is, in our modern civilisation, a season of general stocktaking. While the counting-house overhauls its goods and strikes balances, the pulpit, following the fashion, invites men to reckon with their inner selves. The spiritual exercise to which people are thus exhorted is apt, with some natures, to lead to results other than those contemplated by the preacher. Men have nowadays a new fashion of dealing with their shortcomings. Instead of taking them as a reason for contrition and amendment, they make them a ground of expostulation with Providence. Heredity and the nature of things are the sinners, and not they. The tables are turned, and people—at least, some of them—are much more occupied in criticising heaven than in accepting its verdict upon themselves. This

modern discontent shows itself in two directions. With some it is a refusal to accept the common human lot. With others it is a revolt against their individual share in it.

Of course the general impeachment of human life, as in itself an evil and not a good, now fashionable in certain circles is not a special birth of this age. We find it scattered over all the ages. The Greeks, whose view of life is strangely considered by some writers as having been so much sunnier than the Christian, summed it up in that cheerful line of Sophocles, which declares that "the best of all lots is never to be born at all." Omar Khayyam, too, in the eleventh century, could flutter it with the most cynical of our modern pessimists, with his idea of existence as

One moment in annihilation's waste,  
One moment, of the well of life to taste.

In our own day this wail over life in general has been largely the outcome of scientific materialism. But not entirely. A gloomy theology has had not inconsiderably to do with it. It was this which, grafted on to a morbid

temperament, led John Foster to say that he could never view the growth of population with any other feeling than regret, and which wrung from Professor Henry Rogers the avowal: "For my part, I should not grieve if the whole race of manhood died in its fourth year. As far as I can see I do not know it would be a thing much to be lamented." A pretty system of the universe, surely, which could lead up to such a conclusion! We suspect, however, that talk of this kind, whether it come from philosophers, poets, or theologians, is generally the outcome, not so much of arguments or systems as of a mood. It is humanity in a bilious fit, where the patient needs to be dealt with, not so much by controversy as by a return to primitive laws of health.

What we have specially in view in this chapter, however, is not so much the state of mind which rails at the common lot, as that which refuses to be reconciled to its own. There are, it has been said, two kinds of pride—one which lives by an exaggerated estimate of oneself, and the other which refuses to let a

man contentedly accept himself. The last is infinitely the more interesting. The study of its working brings us so close to the pathos and the tragedy of life. Men let slip their own birthright while they are staring enviously at their neighbour's. By a perverse ingenuity they persist in placing their ideal outside their own possibilities. Here is a man physically weak, but compensated by a strain of rare inner faculty which multitudes envy. He despises it and himself in his yearning after the—to him—unreachable. He would pitch away his scholarship and creative power to-morrow for the power of climbing an Alp, or of winning the Diamond Sculls, and moans because he has not the chance. In another man this self-disgust is born of comparison. The good in him is killed by the better in the next man. He hears Rubenstein, and vows he will never touch a piano again. He sees "Little Billee" do that sketch of Trilby's foot on the wall, and in despair drives his fist through his own canvas. The men who have the greatest difficulty in accepting themselves

are not the dunces and the dead failures. They are the clever people who by a hair's breadth have missed being first. To know they are gifted beyond the common, and that yet, for want of some omitted pinch of salt in their composition—a lack it may be of physical staying power, or from a bar sinister in their connections, or an unlucky circumstance in their history—the other man has gained what they once felt sure of; this it is which makes their martyrdom.

There is, so far as we know, only one thing that, amid these temptations to the other view, can reconcile ourselves to ourselves. This is the primitive faith that our lot is an ordained lot, given us to make the best of. Say, if we will, after the modern fashion, that our life inheritance—in its elements of body, mind, and circumstance—is just what our ancestors have made it; that its limitations, its thinness of soil, its heavy encumbrances are due to their mismanagement. If we are healthy-minded we shall see in all this simply a reason for more careful farming on our own part. If we can



thereby pay off some of the liabilities and hand down the estate to our successors in better condition than we found it, that will be something. But there is more than this. The faith that accepts our lot, whatever it be, as ordained, will also see in it the battle-ground on which is to be fought out the great fight for our own personality, for our enduring spiritual self. On this point we could not do better for modern Pessimism, be it scientific, philosophic, or religious, than to recommend to it the steady reading of a thinker too little known in England, the German Rothe. To get well into the mind his conception of the universe, as having for its one end the development of spiritual personality by the conflict in all worlds of free will with circumstance, a view in which difficulties, sorrows, pains are regarded as factors in the process, and heaven and the angelic hierarchy as some of its achieved results, is to sweep as with a keen north wind the fogs out of our brain, and to set us cheerfully to work.

It is, too, a faith of this kind which enables

us, not only to accept ourselves, but also the man who has beaten us in the race. We learn to rejoice in his greater gifts and success as enriching that common life of which we are privileged to partake. Here comes in that deep saying of Goethe: "If during our life-time we see that performed by others to which we ourselves felt an earlier call, but had been obliged to give up, with much besides, then the beautiful feeling enters the mind, that only mankind together is the true man, and that the individual can only be joyous and happy when he has the courage to feel himself in the whole."

The doctrine, then, is, that we are to accept ourselves as being, after all, something which God meant, a possibility or a bundle of possibilities out of which, with His help, we may create a result which will enrich the sum total of existence. Into the process our weakness and pain, as well as our strength and joy, our disappointment and defeat, as well as our rapture and victory, come as needful elements. But the self which we thus accept will never be

a finality. It will be always a "becoming." While planting our ideal in the region of the possible we shall continually see "Amplius" written across the attempts we make to realise it. We may not reach the goal we seek, but it will at least have drawn us a long way upward, besides giving us a habit of climbing which will very likely serve in the next world as well as this.

That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it;  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.

That has the world here; should he need the next?  
Let the world mind him.  
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed,  
Seeking, shall find Him.

## XXIV.

### Life's Unknown Quantities.

EMERSON has, in one of his essays, a striking passage in which he speaks of the way in which the machinery of society adapts itself almost automatically to the varying fortunes of the individual. A man in the heat of passion commits some crime which, in his earlier years, would have seemed to him impossible. When he comes to himself it appears incredible that he should have done such a thing. He finds, however, society, with its police, its magistrates, its dock, its criminal procedure, calmly and methodically dealing with this phase of his career as though it had been waiting for it through all his years. It is a somewhat gruesome reflection, but there is an idea underlying it which may be carried further. The varied apparatus of civilisation, and its startling relation to us under certain

contingencies, suggests an even more complex structure and its relations—that, namely, of our own organism and inner consciousness. It would be a bewildering calculation to endeavour to total up the sum of all the phases and shades of thought and feeling passed through by a fully-developed modern man in the course of a lifetime. But the calculation would, after all, be simple when compared with another—that of the experiences which, through that lifetime, have been possible to such a nature, but into which it has never entered. There is something eerie in the thought of the pictures which our inner machinery is prepared to throw at any moment upon the screen of our consciousness, but which will never come there. The precise sensation realised by a person when threatened by a terrible catastrophe, such as death by burning or by murder; or that, on the other hand, felt on the news of the coming to us of a great fortune, is what few among us will ever know. None the less the registering apparatus for the production of that sensation is all ready within us, and would, on occasion, produce it

there with infallible accuracy. Poets have often chosen psychological themes as the subject of their muse. They have written on Hope, on Memory, on Imagination. There is clearly a field open for another great poem—the Unrealised Possibilities of Consciousness.

But the subject of life's unknown quantities is not exhausted by this class of consideration. Another side of it emerges when we come to study, not simply the existing capabilities which are never called into action, but the possible further development of the capacities themselves. We are ridiculously ignorant, most of us, about our own powers. There are stops in our organ which we have never tried, and which perhaps contain our finest tones. Sir William Hamilton's story of the servant-girl who, in the delirium of fever, repeated the Psalms of David in Hebrew, from having overheard her clerical master daily read them aloud—a feat quite impossible while in health and in her ordinary mental condition—shows the latent capacities of an untrained memory when raised a little above its normal state.

What is true of the memory is, we may suppose, equally true of all our powers. Evolution suggests that every faculty we possess is as yet in a rudimentary condition. Some of those destined in the future to play the most important *rôles* in the human drama are hardly as yet above the horizon. The faculty of second sight, for instance, so abundantly testified to as existing amongst the Celtic races; and the mysterious powers, baffling completely our Western science, shown by Eastern yogi, we may well believe are part of our common heritage, if we knew only where to find and how to train them. It is curious to reflect what a revolution might come in our view of the universe by the development in us of a new organ of perception. A fresh window let in to the wall of our consciousness might make our knowledge of the spiritual world as certain as that of the planetary system, and cause Agnosticism, Pessimism, and Materialism to be tenable only in Bedlam. And no sound Evolutionist will say that such an organic development is impossible. The outside uni-



verse contains innumerable unknown quantities; and that man has, in his microcosm, the elements which answer to them all, may be far more than a poetic conceit. What Goethe said of the Divine immanence has its meaning also for man—

Ihm ziemt's, die Welt im Innern zu bewegen  
Natur in sich, sich in Natur zu hegen.

The unknown about ourselves presents itself also very vividly when we consider our daily changing relation to environment. We do not need to have read Kant to discover that our consciousness from moment to moment is a compound of the action of our internal perceptive organs and of the play upon them of the external world. How far the variations in the second of the conditions is capable of influencing our subjective states is what none of us is sure about. Glycerine by itself seems the most innocent of substances, but one of its combinations forms the most terrific of explosives. In like manner natures that for years have seemed to themselves and to their neighbours born to simplicity and to quietness have, by combination

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with new circumstances or new personalities, developed into tremendous forces of revolution or of crime. The devout gentleman-farmer of Huntingdon never in his earlier years imagined that he would one day make the name of Cromwell so feared, hated, and admired. Had not his uncle, the reigning Pontiff, insisted on his joining as a young man, and against his own will, the Papal Court at Rome, Alexander VI. would probably have led a peaceful and unnoted career, instead of making the name of Borgia the symbol for everything execrable in cruelty, hypocrisy, and vice. Of humbler men the same is true. As Ruskin says: "The virtues of the inhabitants of many country districts are apparent, not real; it is only the monotony of circumstances and the absence of temptation which prevent the exhibition of passions not less real because often dormant." Considerations of this kind may well bring charity into our judgments of others, and destroy overweening confidence in our estimate of ourselves. The result of the study of the unknown quantities in our own character, and in the environ-

ments to which it has yet to relate itself, should make us realise, as each new day begins, our absolute dependence for spiritual upholding and progress on Him whose knowledge is perfect, and whose promised grace is adequate to our utmost need.

## XXV.

### The Soul and Public Opinion.

It is a singular fact, of which history is, nevertheless, fertile in illustrations, that prisons are apt to get as their occupants two classes of people, the best and the worst. The reason for this, namely, that these have alike set themselves against the recognised public opinion of their country, is very suggestive as to the nature of this said public opinion, its power, its limitations, and the true relation of right-minded persons towards it as a rule of conduct.

When a thoughtful man asks himself what is the standard by which his daily life is regulated he finds himself at every turn of his investigations confronted by this seemingly omnipresent and almost omnipotent force. The laws of the land and its established institutions, which limit his action in so many directions, are

what may be called crystallised public opinion. They are walls built of thoughts, the intellectual and moral life of past generations which have passed from the fluid into the solid state. The religious forces that operate upon him are another form of public opinion, showing itself again in its solid and fluid varieties. The written Scriptures, the Church organisations, customs, and usages are the religious thought and feeling of former ages, at their origin flowing and spontaneous, now preserved by the fact of their having become congealed.

But the solidified public opinion of the past, both in the religious and the secular life, whether regarded as laws and codes or as Scripture and Church, are, we are daily conscious, supplemented in the control of human action by a force which is even mightier, the thought and feeling, namely, of the living present, which is not fixed but fluid, and which is welling up ever fresh from the hidden fountains that feed the common human consciousness. That this fluid form of public opinion is stronger than the fixed is shown by

the fact that in the region of laws and public institutions it is incessantly modifying, destroying, and renewing; while in religion it gives quite new interpretations of its written authorities, revises its opinion of their value, and obtains outlooks independent of their direct suggestion.

From this it would seem to follow that fluid public opinion, in the sense, that is, of the existing common consciousness of an age, were the ultimate standard both for the determination of truth and the judgment of character. Looking further, however, we are confronted by some disturbing considerations which seems to prevent our settling down in this conclusion. We find, for instance, that public opinion in the past has been full of errors in ideas and of defects in morals. We shudder at the views and practices sanctioned by the public opinion of Carthage as depicted by Flaubert in "Salamambo." In our own day, we of the West are equally far from the conclusions of the public opinion of those Indian hill tribes described by Mr. Herbert Spencer in his

Ethics, who regard murder and stealing as a necessary element in the education and outfit of a virtuous character. Are, then, morals an affair of latitude and of date, settled by vote and voice of the majority in a given place and time? We know to the contrary. Not more certain are we that Galileo was right in his contention about the earth and the sun, though in a minority of one, than we are certain that the ethical ideas of the Carthaginians and of the Indian hill tribes aforesaid represent moral inferiority and falsity.

What, then, is the ultimate standard of truth and conduct, and what is the relation to it of public opinion? The line of thought we have been following leads, we think, straight to the answer. The standard is an Eternal Truth and an Eternal Righteousness existent and inherent in the universe, towards which the evolution of the human mind and human character is a constant approximation. In other terms, man is in the presence of a slow but continuous process of unveiling or revelation of this truth and right. That he has continually blundered both



in his mental and moral appreciations means that he nearly always begins by misconstruing the lesson set before him. But he ends by mastering it, and by knowing he has done so.

The current opinion of an age, both in science, ethics, and religion, represents then, not the standard itself, but the degree to which the ultimate truth, as it lies in the Divine mind, has been apprehended, and acquiesced in by it. And here lies the explanation of the anomaly we mentioned at the beginning, of the ranks of those condemned by existent public opinion, numbering in them representatives at once of the worst and of the best of mankind. The man who defies public opinion may do so because he is a rogue or because he is a prophet. The three crosses at Jerusalem, on which hung two thieves, and in their midst a Christ, is of this antithesis the eternal illustration. The malefactors were punished because they were behind the ethical level of the public consciousness, the Christ because He was beyond it.

The history of the onward movement of society continually offers the same spectacle.

When Pastor Hopkins, of Newport, U.S., rose one morning in his pulpit and to his congregation, made up largely of men whose pecuniary interests were in the slave trade, delivered a testimony, the first of its kind in America, which, he said, had been laid on his conscience to proclaim, to the effect that slavery was un-Christian and iniquitous, he was exhibiting the whole *rationale* of the Divine education of humanity. For years he had kept step with the rank and file of his people. He had shared the public opinion of his time and place. He saw what his countrymen saw. Then there fell upon him the ray of a new dawn, and, like Abraham of old, the sharer in a like experience, he must go forth, following it, not knowing whither he went.

We get here our answer to the question as to the true relation of the individual to the public opinion of his day. It is well for him to keep up with it, for it is, on a multitude of points, the product of successive revelations of unspeakable value. The average man will not get beyond it—will, in fact, need its *esprit de*

*corps* to maintain himself at the height it has reached. But the deeper spirits whom God has chosen as prophets and leaders must ever hold themselves open to the further unfolding of His unceasing revelation, and in obedience thereto to break rank and move on, as fore-runners of the new and higher order.

## XXVI.

### Our Best and Worst.

THE study of mankind is, under any circumstances, a sufficiently confusing business. But it becomes doubly so when we take into account not only what people have actually done in life, but what they might have done. For it is very seldom, we imagine, that the best or the worst in us gets either revealed or struck into action. The man of exceptional moral solidity, who has passed through his career without any apparent catastrophe, has to admit to himself that if certain moods and inclinations that have possessed him at times had coincided with an easily possible set of external circumstances, the conjunction might, for all he can see, have made him a lecher or a thief. Happily, and he may add providentially, the subjective condition and the outer opportunity did not get linked together, and he escaped.

But exactly the same may be said of the possible good in him. When we read of men in a colliery accident flinging themselves away in an heroic attempt at rescue; or of the five hundred English infantry who, with their officers, stood on the deck of the doomed *Birkenhead*, while the women and children were rescued, and then calmly, as if they were on parade, and without a man breaking the rank, went down with the foundering ship, our heart leaps at the moral grandeur of it. Yet there are thousands of men about who, if they had been at that pit mouth or at that shipwreck, would have done exactly as these did, but whose present record is of getting drunk with considerable persistency, and of occasionally beating their wives. Dickens's hero in "The Tale of Two Cities," who after being long considered by himself and his friends as a ne'er do weel, laid down his life at the guillotine to save his friend, is a man you may pick up in the next street. There is a Divine act in him also if it only got its chance.

It is, indeed, the gradual dawn upon the modern mind of the truth that a man is not so much a fact as a possibility, "an eternal becoming," that is altering our whole way of judging him, both religiously and for practical ends. When, for instance, we remember out of what moral origins Sydney, Melbourne, and San Francisco have reached their present height of civilisation, we cannot in our national appraisements set down our least hopeful classes as a mere bad debt. They are rather so much locked-up capital which it is for society to discover how profitably to employ; a store of energy at present misdirected, which we have to find out how to turn on to the social and industrial mill-wheels.

Looking at the subject in its personal aspect, we are struck by the difference in the way men take both the best and the worst in themselves. The mass of people offer only their average for outside consumption. Their self-revelations have a limit, both in the upper and the lower ranges. The chief significance of most auto

biographies lies in what is left unsaid. The exceptions to this—and there have been some extraordinary ones—serve to prove the rule. The candour of the man who tells us everything seems unnatural, and even revolting. When Rousseau calmly informs us in the “Confessions” that he, the man who wrote “Emile,” with its lofty precepts on child training, handed over his own children, all of them illegitimate, to the fate of *enfants trouvés*, the fate, that is, of paupers deserted of their parents, we feel that a man of his pretensions in showing himself capable, first of such a deed as this, and then of declaring it to the world, was only excusable and even explainable on the supposition of his latest continental biographer that he was mad. We have a like sensation in reading the memoirs of that most astonishing of mortals, Benvenuto Cellini. To find him on one page, as in his description of his imprisonment in the Castle of St. Angelo, setting forth his pious aspirations, his unswerving faith in God, his delight in the study of the Scriptures, and his visions



of heaven, and on another, with equal minuteness and apparently equal satisfaction, telling the story of his murders, and of his astounding debaucheries, is to confound all our notions of sane humanity.

These men, without reserves and without remorse, were monstrosities. The average mortal, at least among the Western races, has a curious reticence about both the good and the bad in him; the reticence being, on the whole, perhaps greater about the former than the latter. An English schoolboy would rather be caught stealing apples than saying his prayers; while his father would sooner face a battery than imitate the Mussulman who, at midday, dropped on his knees in Hyde Park with his face to the East. The plain-looking City man, who for twenty years has talked politics and the news of the day with his fellow-passenger on the way to town, has never during that period given him a hint that he is a mystic, a spiritual wrestler who has discovered, with Omar Khayyâm, that—

**Myself am heaven and hell.**

Another of the singularities of this subject is the apparently incommensurable difference between the quality of the best and worst in different men. What common measure, for instance, is there which will enable us to scientifically determine the relative demerit of the worst in a Carlyle and the worst in a Newman? What ratio is there between the bearishness of the philosopher which made him, to his mother's and his wife's cost, "gey ill to live wi'," and the narrowness of sympathy in the theologian which permitted him to declare that "a publisher of heresy should be treated as if he were embodied evil," and to speak of the sudden death of Arius as a declaration of Divine Providence against his system? Here are two great men at their worst, and yet, after thousands of years devoted to the study of morals, the world has absolutely no means of appraising the relative quality of their badness. Our planet has plainly a good deal of schooling to go through yet before it can call itself educated.

As to the ultimate prospects of our best and

worst, the Christian evolutionist has no doubt. It may be that in the past man's history has been mainly zoological, a history that is of his animal appetites and instincts, and that it is only beginning to be a human history. But the process of humanising and spiritualising is going on and will go on.

The feeling of each one of us that we have a Cain and Abel within, and that our business here is to reverse the Scripture story and to make our Abel kill our Cain, is in itself a kind of revelation and an element of immense hope about the future. There are, it has been said, two kinds of pride—one which makes us approve ourselves, and another which makes it impossible to accept ourselves. This last, indeed, might be better named. It is a Divine instinct, a grace, which arms us for the work of self-reclamation. Every man needs to be an Evangelisation Society whose operations begin with himself. He will find there plenty of scope. That some men have a vastly harder fight here than others is unquestionable. When Newman, to mention him again,

says he was never troubled with the impulses of sexual passion after twenty-five, what a mighty simplification was this of a man's moral problem! To read, on the other hand, of Chateaubriand, that the brilliant author of the "Génie du Christianisme" had, as his intimates knew, "an obscene Chateaubriand within him," which at times broke out, is to find ourselves nearer the condition of a good many other men of genius who have been the world's spiritual teachers.

The problem here is puzzling and painful; but all the light which converges on the modern consciousness from science, history, philosophy, and revelation makes it ever clearer that in this great fight, waged in the individual and the race, between flesh and spirit, between good and evil, it is spirit and good that will triumph. The human movement is toward the kingdom of God.

And as I saw the sin and death, even so  
See I the need yet transiency of both;  
The good and glory consummated thence.

## XXVII.

### Survivals.

LIFE possesses few things more interesting or more revealing than its survivals. They have such a story to tell. The skilled eye can read in them a whole history of the past as well as a prophecy of the future. In his evolution upward man carries with him all kinds of quaint material belonging to life's lower stages. Each one of us, in the contents both of body and mind, is a museum of prehistoric time. We not only date from an immemorial past, but we have brought it with us. Drummond, in his "Ascent of Man," has made the unscientific reader familiar with the startling revelations of our physical frame; of tell-tale marks on limb and organ and feature which show the way we have worked upwards from the level of the

Dragons of the prime  
Who tare each other in their slime,

to where we now are. And the way in which embryology confirms this story is, we suppose, known more or less to most of us.

It is, however, in the region of the inner man, of his thought and feeling, that we come upon the most significant of life's survivals. Take, to begin with, those of race and heredity. One hardly wonders at the grip the doctrine of metempsychosis has had upon men when we remember how, as a race, we are haunted by the ghosts of earlier times. We can never get rid of our ancestors, and they have a habit of cropping up in the most unexpected and sometimes most disagreeable ways. Into a family full of pieties and respectabilities will be born a son of primitive and barbarous instincts, in whom the bewildered parents can trace no resemblance to themselves. The resemblance is indeed not to them, but to a disreputable ancestor of five generations ago, whose qualities have slumbered in the blood of their line from then till now. Our fight to-day is not **only** with the difficulties of

the present, but with these spirits of the past.

Man's religious history is full of the element of survival. All the great world faiths are rich in relics of earlier forms. The Jewish accounts of the Creation, the Flood and the Fall are, as every Sunday scholar now knows, directly related to Assyrian and Babylonian legends. In like manner Christianity has taken over all manner of relics of ruder faiths. Christmas was a pagan festival of the winter solstice, and has become Christian by adoption. The advice given by Pope Gregory to Augustine in his dealing with the heathen English, not to abolish their festivals or their temples, but to turn them to Catholic uses, has been followed to such an extent throughout Christendom that the archæologist finds everywhere in local religious usages a kind of baptized paganism. Mohammedanism exhibits the same law. It is full of remains of the earlier Arabic cult which Mohammed superseded. The most singular illustration of this is perhaps the worship paid to the



Kaaba, or black stone of Mecca, held to have fallen from heaven. The religious observance paid to it is in strange contradiction to the Mohammedan prohibition of idols. As a matter of fact, the prophet found the cult of the stone too ancient and too deeply rooted to permit of its being ignored or destroyed. Like a good business man, therefore, he appropriated its religious vogue as part of the assets of the new faith.

So far we have been dealing with the subject on its purely matter-of-fact and historical side. There is an aspect of it, however, which permits of another kind of treatment. It is the survivals in our personal life which come closest home to us. And out of the infinite variety of them there are some specially worthy of selection for the light they shed on character and destiny.

The most obvious of our personal survivals is the one contained in memory—the marvellous faculty which makes our past a present, and permits us to repeat our life

to ourselves a thousand times over. Nothing perhaps so vividly exhibits our earthly career as a progress from the natural to the spiritual as the operation of memory. For in its processes we see the raw material of experience, the rough products of the consciousness in its contact with the world, subtilised, etherealised, made into possessions of pure spirit which are held by it for ever. The value of this form of our life lies in the fact that it is, to so unique an extent, under the mind's own control. Our daily contact with the world is an encounter forced upon us whether we will or no. Its incidents and experiences are our fate, which we cannot avoid and must make the best of. But in the survival life of memory we can pick and choose. And we wonder that people do not value higher than they seem to, this glorious boon permitted to mortals of being able, in the midst of monotonous tasks, to call back at will their days of joy, to reproduce the merry jest, the glorious mountain climb, the moment of unexpected success,

the feast of kindred minds, the supreme heights of feeling which have made up life's best hours.

Another of the great personal survivals is that which belongs to the region of feeling, and which is illustrated specially in religion and love. In religion that which counts is not so much what we start with as what survives. A man of fifty who has thought his way through the problems of an age like our own, lives in a mental region startlingly different from that of his youth. A whole world of ideas has dropped away. He looks over a new heaven and a new earth. Yet, if his life has been pure and his intent honest, his religious feeling will have come out of the hurly-burly no whit damaged and in its essence scarcely changed. If difference there be it is that his faith is more essentially childlike. All the motives to trust, to sacrifice, to service, and to love have strengthened with the wider horizon and the deepened experience. From what he has learned of fatherhood he understands,

as he never could in the earlier years, what it is to be a child.

The same principle holds in love. The test of it is its survivals. The earlier period, with its passional attraction and its tumult of the senses, offers a judgment more or less confused. It is when, with husband and wife, this phase of the relationship has been passed through and discounted, that one can discern whether or no the root of the matter is in them. For a true union is another illustration of the divinely ordered progress of life from the natural to the spiritual. And it is in its later stages that we discern whether the flower has produced the fruit. A relationship such as that between Mr. Holt Hutton and the wife whose shattered frame he through long years tended with such devotion is one in which through the veil of the flesh we see shining the divinest things.

We said a moment ago that it takes maturity to understand what it is to be a child. The remark is suggestive of one

of the happiest of life survivals, that of the boy in the man. Where it exists we have the miracle of perpetual youth. The boyhood of the old fellows who understand this secret, who can at sixty "laugh the heart's laugh," to whom a country walk, a schoolboy's face and talk, a game of cricket (played by deputy), stir all the by-gone enthusiasms, has a distinct advantage over the boyhood that is only in its teens. The grown-up boys have the youthful feeling and, what the other youngsters are not so conscious of, a proper sense of its delightfulness. Here, again, we discern the upward, the etherealising movement of the truly human life. What was given it at the beginning in the rough experimental form it retains later as a spiritual essence. The boyhood of the boy is animal. That of the man has a touch from another sphere.

The whole of this topic hangs together, and its evidence points one way. In man's physical frame, in his religious faiths, in his social relationships, in his innermost

feelings we discover marks of lowliest origin, but of an ever upward movement. And the depth of the beginning is in startling contrast to the height of the consummation. The progress of humanity is from nothing to the infinite. Out of the material it fabricates the spiritual. And the permanence of this last is of all life's survivals the greatest. Said his friends to Socrates before he drank the hemlock, "How shall we bury you?" "As you please," was the reply, "but first be sure that you have me." To the old Greek thinker was it clear, as on higher evidence it has become yet more clear to us, that the inner wealth of the soul, the spoil of its struggle in this world of sense, will be life's great survival after its last grim fight with death.

## XXVIII.

### The World's Silences.

THERE is a whole psychology of silence. The gamut of emotions drawn up by Fontenelle, the thirty-seven states of mind described by the Buddhists, might be stated in terms of silence almost as well as in those of speech. Every human relationship, from that of entirest harmony down to the last extremities of estrangement, can be expressed by silence. It may mean the highest bliss or the direst wretchedness, life's comedy or its tragedy. And man encounters not only the human silences. Stamping themselves at times even more vividly on the soul, forming by turns its consolation, its terror, its baffling mystery, are those of nature and the Infinite. The topic altogether offers to the analyst far more material than we can here deal with. Suffice it to touch one or two of its salient points.



Nothing appeals more powerfully to the imagination than the great silences of nature. This overcrowded planet has some lonely places still. Our own thought in this connection goes back to an unfrequented pass in the Grisons, climbed alone in the depth of winter, where, high above all trace of life, shut in on every side by walls of snow and rock, the blue sky above seeming, to the eye turned to it from the dazzling white beneath, an awful ebon black, the beating of the heart was the one thing audible, and the sensation that of being at the bottom of a crater in the moon. Such experiences help us to picture what the silence must be in places like the far depths of the Antarctic circle, where for countless centuries there has been no voice, no human footfall, no movement of life, nothing but

A wind that shrills all night  
In a waste land where no man comes,  
Or hath come since the making of the world.

We need not, however, go so far afield for the world's possibilities of silence. Who of us has not, in lonely watches of the night, come,

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by our own homestead, upon a hush of things, intense, mysterious, as though Nature were listening for some whisper to her from the Infinite!

Creation sleeps: 'tis as the general pulse  
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause,  
An awful pause—prophetic of her doom.

Nowhere, so far as our reading goes, has the awe of such a time and the soul's response to it been more vividly portrayed than in Isaac Taylor's essay on "A Country Ride in a Dark Night." Whoso wants a masterpiece of observant imagination, and to be led to the very centre of the secret of stillness, cannot do better than open the works of this acute thinker and prose-poet—too little read in these days—at that page of them.

Meantime we may come here from nature's to some of the human silences. These are, as we have said, of all kinds and orders of significance. There is one observation, however, of which they are alike susceptible. Extreme emotions of all kinds are silent. Joy, terror, astonishment, rage, when carried to an extrem-

ity, are without voice. Just as the external vibrations which produce sound when carried beyond a certain velocity go beyond the recognition of the ear, so the soul's internal vibration, however caused, may reach extremes which transcend speech. These, however, are abnormal, and for the most part momentary conditions. More fruitful is the study of the silences which obtain in ordinary life.

Pleasant to think of, for instance, is the silence of perfect sympathy. This is the test of intimacy. A fellowship is only complete when the partners in it find themselves entirely at ease without the necessity of a word. We are a long way from this condition when, as often happens, we talk and talk simply because we realise that a pause would be awkward on both sides. The picture of Carlyle and his mother sitting at opposite sides of the fireplace, each smoking a long churchwarden, in absolute content, but without a word passing, illustrates precisely what we mean. We get here, perhaps, a foretaste of a stage of being when souls will communicate without the cumbrous apparatus

of language. Under present conditions even the degree is marvellous to which sympathetic natures can influence each other without words. There are souls which, in silence, seem to give off of their very essence and to interpenetrate others with it. It is as though the harmony within communicated a rhythmic pulsation which played on responsive natures like spirit music. A volume lies in the sentence in the life of Lord Lawrence which says that he felt uneasy if his wife left the room. Happy man! To possess as one's own this benediction of a presence that can bless without a word is to be rich indeed. If the sympathetic natures could all find each other what high bridals would there be!

But as there is a silence from perfect sympathy, so is there one, equally interesting, though not so pleasant to contemplate, from imperfect sympathy. Of this species, indeed, there are all varieties and shades. There is that, for instance, which falls at times upon the advanced thinker when in certain circles. He is, perhaps, brusquely asked for his position

on some question in religion or theology, and he finds himself unable to state it. He cannot properly interpret himself. His interlocutor, he feels, is not in a position to judge the evidence. He has not passed through the experiences, the studies, the thought processes which have led to his own standpoint. He is entirely clear about the matter himself, but his words, which mean one thing to him, but would mean something else to this less prepared mind, would certainly introduce confusion there. He is compelled to a policy of reserve. If he speaks at all it will be, as with a greater Teacher before him, in parables, keeping his fullest thought for those who can receive it.

What an inward history lies behind these silences, if one could only get at it! One wonders what passed through the mind of Tauler when for the space of two years he, the great preacher and spiritual leader, found himself dumb in the midst of his people. What a deeper tragedy, too, that of a Roger Bacon, endowed with one of the greatest intellects that

Europe has ever produced, yet, perforce, keeping his lips sealed because his message to the monkish horde around him spelled only heresy, blasphemy and insanity! On a smaller scale crucifixions of this kind are going on all around us. Into a family, every other member of which is rudely materialistic, is born a high sensitive nature, unworldly, filled with ideals, throbbing with intense response to the spiritual. That nature can never speak of its deepest where it is. And the pitifullest thing of all is when one sees such spirits, despairing of being understood, saying with Amiel, "I cannot be in the right all alone," and so trying to rid themselves of the shame of their singularity by a move downward to the common level. It is the worst of treasons. Less heinous were it to deliver one's country to the enemy than to repudiate the best that is in ourselves.

We can only hint in closing at what is the deepest side of our theme. We mean the awful—to some natures almost maddening—silence of the universe toward our human

questioning. The picture in "Tancred" of the hero, a nineteenth century Englishman, journeying to Mount Sinai and prostrating himself on its bald summit, crying for a new revelation, is a pathetic if overdrawn illustration of the soul's ceaseless desire for some authentic utterance to it from Heaven. That desire has built churches, created legends, formed religions. Man has endless stories of heavenly communications, yet when we ourselves look up and listen, how complete and baffling is the silence! Science explodes the legends and declares that no articulate voice, except that of man himself, has been ever heard on this planet. The worlds revolve around us, the stars glitter in their abysmal depths, but no word comes to us from them. What then? Has faith lost its foothold? In no wise. What all this amounts to is simply the reaffirmation, in other terms, of our deepest doctrine, that of Incarnation. The voice that speaks to man comes ever through man. The entrance of the Divine into our life is always *viâ* our own thought and intuition. That the great truths



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on which we build rose first and shaped themselves in the human consciousness detracts no whit from their divinity. It points to their source while indicating the way they have travelled.

## XXIX.

### The Soul's Pathfinders.

A CHARMING book, written a generation ago by a well-known American divine, entitled, "The Rifle, Axe, and Saddlebags," depicts in vivid fashion the life of the backwoods preacher of an earlier time. He had to be an expert as much in handling a rifle as a text, to know not only how to preach sermons but to swim rivers, and to be as thoroughly at home in dealing with a grizzly as with a convert. It was a great race of religious frontiersmen, this generation of simple-minded, sinewy-bodied, devout-souled, singing, praying, rejoicing evangelists of prairie and of backwood, worthy of the Church's lasting and loving remembrance. But they, and such as they, form only a portion of the heroic band who, as we review the story of the world's religious progress, occupy the position which our title designates. For the

pathfinder is of many types and of varying tasks. He has immense diversities, combined with elements that are common. The characteristic that unites him to the rest of his special genius is that he is, in his own line, always a frontiersman, a border fighter, a spiritual Uhlan, ever in advance of the slower moving main body.

The presence throughout history of the pathfinder is, indeed, when we think of it, an impressive lesson on the destiny at once of religion and of the human race. Every generation tells the same story. It is of a constantly widening territory, both of action and of thought; of the mass of men, wearied in the struggle by which the new region has been secured, anxious to settle down in it, and to rest awhile that they may enjoy it; and then of the call from the elect spirits, ever in advance, to strike tents and move on again to the further realms which they have descried. The drowsy mass, waked thus untimely from their slumbers, badger and bully their disturbers, call them bad names and otherwise

ill-treat them. But they end by getting up and staggering on in their wake. Wonderful pilgrimage of humanity, which is never permitted to cease, and which is carrying it on towards a knowledge, a power and a perfectness which seem without end !

The lonely pathfinder who marks out the track is, as we have said, of various kinds. In the directly religious sphere of which we are now treating we see him by turns as evangelist, as administrator, as mystic, as pure thinker. As thus named these seem very different men. But there is a strong family likeness among them. For one thing, they alike realise that in the deepest sense they are "alone, yet not alone." They have appeared in the world to express or put into action a new thought. Yet they know that this thought is in no sense peculiar to their individuality. It is a birth of the age, inevitable, necessary. It existed before as an electricity diffused. In them it has come to a spark, and men recognise the spark as a flash from heaven. They here illustrate what Lamennais has so finely said :

that "thought, in its rise and progress, is a necessary thing. It comes from God. Not the thought of each individual, but the universal thought which goes on from stage to stage, and which is a kind of progressive revelation." The function of the frontiersman here is to mediate that revelation.

When men have once grasped the new thought, it appears so simple that after generations wonder there could have been any fuss about accepting it. The people who wonder should reflect on the difference between making a road and travelling along it. The idea which dawned upon John Wesley, and which made him the religious pathfinder of the eighteenth century, that as people did not come to the Church, the Church must come to the people, appears a very obvious one to us. But so great a man as Bishop Butler could not see it, and denounced Wesley as a bad Churchman for putting it into practice.

This gift, indeed, of seeing first the necessary thing, in the domain either of thought or action, is one which the possessor has to pay

dearly enough for. For one thing his lot is to be lonely, and that as much when he has followers as when he is without them. For the follower is not a companion. By the very fact of following he shows the difference between himself and the leader. The worthy Methodist who scrupulously observes the ecclesiastical routine of his Church is doing exactly the opposite of what Wesley did himself. Wesley was an originator, while this man is an imitator. The leader broke Church rules to gain higher ends. The follower is encased within his rule as an end in itself. The rank and file can march gaily enough, for there are footprints on the road they take. The pathfinder, meanwhile, on whom their gaze is trustingly fixed, moves solitarily on his untrod road, devoid himself of all such help, with his eye searching the awful night for the guidance of its far-off stars. It was a dim consciousness of what this business meant, which, when that prime frontiersman of these later ages, Martin Luther, walked up the imperial audience hall at Worms, made the doughty warrior, George of

Frondsberg, say, as he touched him on the shoulder with his gauntlet: "Little monk, little monk, thou hast a fight before thee which we whose trade is war never faced the like of." The hardy swordsman was right. The peers of "the little monk" in that hour were not such as he. They were George Fox, cutting out his suit of leather, and announcing the kingdom of the Spirit; Benedict, sending out his first colony from Monte Casino; Abraham, going out "not knowing whither he went."

But the pathfinders, if they have their special sorrows, have at the same time their special consolations. One of these is the clear sense of their call to speak or act as they do. "*Ich kann nicht anders*" is not Luther's word only, but that of all his class. To the voice of contemporary opinion which condemns them they find opposed a more imperious opinion within them, which they dare not disobey because they know it is higher. Opposition, indeed, only heartens them. It is the clash of the tournament which is to prove them true knights. They feel about it, as did St.



Teresa, one of their number, who, speaking of her persecutions, said, "My soul is then so mistress of itself that it seems that it is in its kingdom and has everything under its feet." And the voice within which compels them has a wondrous way of compelling others. That "demonstration of the Spirit" of which an illustrious member of this company spoke as accompanying his words is characteristic of their utterance. For their speech lays bare that Universal Reason which is the basis of their soul's life, and which men know to be Divine. One thinks here of Francis of Assisi when before the College of Cardinals, forgetting the address which, under the advice of a friend, he had prepared for the occasion, and instead, as an old biographer chronicles, "falling back on his inspiration," with the result that the august audience was overwhelmed with the feeling that here before them was a man of God with a message from God.

A topic like this branches in all directions if one had space to follow the trails. There is, for instance, the curious way in which men,

who gave little attention to religion as generally conceived, have proved to be nevertheless eminent religious pathfinders. George Stephenson had as little to do as most men with theology. But his railway locomotive, in making the evangelist free, on easy terms, of the whole world, and bringing into the range of possibility such a gathering as the Chicago Parliament of Religions, has enlarged the religious frontier more than the united labours of shiploads of D.D.s. Darwin, too, has not been known as a constructive theologian. But there is no theological system of to-day which is not full of his thought. The two kingdoms, indeed, of matter and spirit intersect at every point, and a man cannot do good honest work in the one without making important contributions to the other.

A study like this should be sufficient to show how the idea of standing still in any department of the Church's life has, by the very nature of things, been rendered impossible. To enter into its good land of truth and privilege, to possess and enjoy it, to cultivate it, and

gather its richest harvests—is that to which we are plainly invited. What is forbidden is to build a wall round it with the inscription, “Thus far, and no farther.” Which is only another way of saying that the soul is placed in an infinite universe, and that its destiny there is to expand to infinity.

### XXX.

## The Soul and Heredity.

THE extent to which the religious thinking of the day is being influenced by science is shown, amongst other things, by the attention bestowed by religious as well as by scientific teachers on the subject of heredity as related to character. The age-long controversies between fatalism and free-will have in our day reappeared under new aspects. The predestination of an Augustine and an Edwards, founded upon metaphysical and theological grounds, has been transformed into the doctrine of a Galton, a Lombroso, and a Weismann, which fixes the destiny of the human subject by the inherited character of the germ-cell from which he has sprung. It is true that on crucial points of the problem the experts are still at open war. Mr. Herbert Spencer and Professor Weismann are at loggerheads as to whether acquired modifica-

tions are or are not transmissible by inheritance. Biologists are divided into those who declare life in all its developments to be merely a form of motion and of chemical affinities, and the large number represented by such masters of research as the physiologist Bunge, who hold that in vitality there inhere a force and a mystery which nothing discoverable in the inorganic world can explain.

Spite of these differences, however, it is undeniable that the trend of a large volume of modern scientific thought has been in the direction of determinism. A man's character, it is held, is the outcome of his past ancestry, as inevitably as the Alpine torrent is a resultant of the glacier above. In the words of Mr. Galton, in his work on "Hereditary Genius," "a man's natural abilities (and, he would add, character) are derived by inheritance under exactly the same limitations as are the form and physical features of the whole organic world."

The results of this widely prevalent view of things crop out in various directions, and with curious effect. One of them is the return of

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many speculative thinkers to the notion of Plato in his "Republic," that the true way of improving the human race is by a scientifically-directed system of breeding. We apply this method, it is argued, with immediate and striking results in dealing with dogs, cattle and horses. In the direction where the results would be the most imposing, namely, with man himself, we neglect it entirely. Society will only put itself on the pathway leading to the highest physical, mental and ethical excellence when it recognises the necessity of regulations in the interests of the whole organism, by which bad, weak, diseased and socially deficient members are weeded out, or at least prevented from reproducing their kind, and the race continued by the proper mixture of the essentially fit. Another indication of the present mental temper on this subject is the manner in which fatalism as to character is practically taken for granted in much current literature and current life. Ibsen is most frequently quoted as the dramatic exponent of this view. But he is not alone. When Dodo, in Mr. Benson's popular

book, justifies all her procedures on the ground that she is what she was made, and that she was not consulted in the making, she speaks as a type, figuring largely, not only in the creations of novelists, but in the living world of to-day. Adam shifted his responsibility on to the shoulders of his wife. His descendants are shifting it back on their progenitors, himself included. It is an easy-going theory, and to many people simplifies things a good deal.

At this point we may ask what religion has to say on these subjects. To begin with, it is to be noted that the Bible is full of the doctrine of heredity. Whatever view we may take of the Fall, it holds as a declaration of the unbroken sequence in cause and effect between the latest generations and the earliest. The Old Testament doctrine, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, is to the same effect. But the Bible, while admitting and affirming the solidarity of the race and the large extent to which a man's destiny is shaped for him before his birth, is at direct issue with the materialistic



fatalism which would rid the individual of moral responsibility. In its story of Jacob and Esau, where two children, born of the same parents and brought up in the same tent, exhibit in their lives the widest divergencies of character, it reduces to its proper proportions the notion that we are going to perfect the race and remove all ethical difficulties by a scientifically selected parentage. The weight of that story lies in the fact that it is absolutely true to human experience. Children differ from their parents continually in a manner that baffles the mechanical theory of transmission.

What religion, in fact, contends for is that the human ego, within a certain limited area—an area conditioned by the facts of heredity and the existing environment—is a fount of creative power. Surrounded by competing and often opposing currents of influence, which beat upon it from both the material and the spiritual world, it has the faculty of choosing which of these it shall yield itself to. The immense changes that come over men as the result of the differing influences under which from time

to time they place themselves, show that our characters are not ready-made and irreversible, but are every day in the making. The view of life, in fact, which accords most closely with Scripture, with the facts of experience, and with our deepest moral intuitions, is that with regards it as an inheritance which we are to deal with as we will. We have not made the inheritance. It comes down to us from the far past, carrying with it all manner of burdens, limitations, mortgages and what not, the result of the good or bad stewardship of those who held it before us. For these limitations we are not answerable. What we are responsible for is, when once in possession, to do the best with what there is. That the estate may have been impoverished by a spendthrift ancestor does not absolve us from the obligation of personal thrift. The more does that lie upon us, in order to improve what is left and hand it on in improved conditions to the next heir. And the man who seeks to do this will find in Christ's Gospel a store of vital energy which will make him master of his fate.

## XXXI.

### The Soul and Pleasure.

ON a theme which has furnished matter for the published moralisings of 3,000 years it would be the height of impertinence to attempt to say anything new. We hasten, indeed, at the outset, to disclaim any such intention. There is, however, an excuse for discussing pleasure, arising out of one curious circumstance. That is, that while the human race appears to have been in conference about it ever since it attained the status, to use Homer's phrase, of articulate speaking men, nothing, as yet, seems to have been settled. We cannot to-day define pleasure, or describe it, or state its relation to philosophy, or to ethics, or to theology, without finding ourselves, whatever our theory may be, in every sentence flatly contradicted by considerable thinkers of our own or other times.

But the topic, though we can promise nothing towards its settlement, remains an excellent one to play round and to explore. Skirting even the smallest portion of its coast line, we find ourselves at every moment lighting upon something fresh. Anon our skiff is caught in the whirlpool, where two conflicting intellectual seas meet, while again our eye is following the receding lines of inlets which run up into and lose themselves amid the central mysteries of existence.

Taking one or two of these stray glimpses, let us look for a moment, to begin with, at the relation of pleasure to pain. The idea that pleasure, as we know it, is necessarily connected with pain, pain being, if not a producing cause, at any rate a necessary condition of it, is as old as the earlier Greek philosophy, but it has been worked a good deal by some modern thinkers. It serves, for one thing, as an illustration of the Hegelian theory of opposites, pain being necessary to the idea of pleasure as that of inner is to outer and upper to under. It is certain when we examine into our own

consciousness that the two are found to be very close, if not inseparable companions. The pleasure of drinking is hardly realisable apart from thirst. The joy of victory, whether over material obstacles or living opponents, seems strictly proportioned to the difficulties previously encountered. The enjoyment of a hungry and belated party on finding themselves at some hospitable refuge in possession of food, warmth, and rest, has the previous hardship and fatigue as one of its most distinctly tasted ingredients. Wherever the investigation is carried the results will be similar. The theory seems to make havoc of some conventional notions about heaven. On the other hand it should certainly put us more in love with our difficulties upon earth.

In the "Philebus" of Plato there is a hint worth following as to the relation of pleasure to the intellect and the moral nature. Taking an illustration from material substances, it is pointed out how, in mixtures and compounds of liquids and other things, everything depends on the proportion with which we combine the in-

gredients. We spoil our sauce or salad by adding too much or too little of this or that element. Modern chemistry, with its law of combining proportions, could make the illustration much more exact and telling. What the idea suggests is whether, in order to a perfectly pleasurable realisation, there may not be required as scientifically correct a combination of the elements of intellect, conscience, will, and passional force as, say, in chemistry, there is needed the combining of so much oxygen and so much hydrogen in order to produce water. The hint might perhaps have been most appropriately dealt with by the author of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World."

The relation of pleasure to intellect raises a question within the four corners of which the youthful orators of debating societies might find ample room to expatiate—namely, whether intellectual development can be at all depended on as a restraint upon passional excess. Most people would be inclined to say "yes," but the holder of the opposite theory would find abundant material to support his contention.

Commencing with natural history, he might first of all affirm that man, the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, is the one member of it who physically indulges himself beyond and contrary to nature's dictates. Coming to history proper, he could point to scenes and periods of the world's highest mental activity, such as that of Athens under Pericles, Italy in the Renaissance, and the France of the Encyclopædists, as exhibiting the most unmeasured profligacy. Passing from fact to reason, it would be easy for him to show a score of ways in which intellectual force may act as a reinforcement, instead of a restraint to the passions. Is it libertinism, the mere animal sensations themselves, that constitutes the chief force of the temptation? Is it not rather the play upon them of the intellectual powers, the memory of past scenes idealised by the imagination, the suggestions in the vast literature of the subject of all ages and languages which scholarship puts within the reach of the intellectual man? The intellect may, of course, be made the most powerful ally of the moral



principle, but the connection does not by any means appear to be a necessary one. The Socratic doctrine which identified them was assuredly in this instance quite wide of the mark. Like the mercenary troops of the Middle Ages, the intellect seems capable of fighting on either side for a consideration. There is, indeed, no more impressive argument for the Christian doctrine of grace than the one which comes from a consideration of this kind.

There remains on the subject of pleasure, however, a question which some perhaps will think should have come at the beginning of the discussion, but which, whether standing at the beginning or end of it, will remain, we fear, an unsolved problem. What, after all, is pleasure, and wherein does it consist? We study half-a-dozen persons seeking it in different ways. One is reading a novel, a second is journeying through noble scenery, a third is engaged on a problem in chess or mathematics, a fourth is eating or drinking, or satisfying some other animal appetite. If

we examine the consciousness of the actual moment in the case of any one of these, we shall find that in each case the mind is not resting in that moment, as though satisfied in it, but pressing out of it towards something beyond. What is more, the something beyond is never reached. The novel reader hurries on from page to page, as though expecting, when the plot is fully unravelled and the story told, that some desirable end will have been gained. But the end gained is vacuity—a sense of being flung back by the last sentence upon one's own empty self. In like manner men rush through the differing phases of a form of animal sensation, as though the consummation could furnish the prize. What they find there is, again, a dead wall, against which the baffled consciousness helplessly dashes itself; and so through every other pursuit. In this view of it life, even at its highest moments, seems one vast and perpetual anticipation. It may be none the worse for that. May we not take this wonderful law as the surest and most plainly written of the

prophecies concerning man's relation to a future and higher state of being? It is when contemplating this side of things that we feel the weight of Plato's argument—that what the human soul, shut up in its mortal prison house, deals with in the present life is only the outward show of the actual, and that for the Reality which will satisfy it we must wait. In that pathetic struggle of Greek philosophy with the problem of life and its result we may surely recognise a *preparatio evangelica*—a Divinely-ordered introduction to the kingdom and teaching of Jesus.

## XXXII.

### **Spiritual Amalgams.**

It is a hopeful feature in modern religious thought that, on so many of the problems which puzzled and hopelessly confused former generations, we are at last beginning fairly to see our way. It is quite possible, indeed, that our generation, decried so often as sceptical and decadent, may turn out to be, in the view of posterity, an era of spiritual revelation. Some new clues are certainly in our hands, and they promise to act on old world difficulties as effectively as did Kepler's laws on the puzzle of planetary motion. It is with one of these clues that we propose here to deal.

The scientific study of religious history, characteristic of our time, has revealed what may be termed a primary law of spiritual evolution. We here come at last to understand that the Divine Life, which is the essence of

religion, is never in its human manifestation found in a pure and absolute form, but ever in combination with something outside of and inferior to itself. And this by a kind of necessity. God as the Absolute can, in the nature of things, only come into contact with man by a self limitation. It is the failure to recognise the character and range of this limitation that has hitherto covered the region of theology with pitfalls. The history of revelation is the history always of an amalgam of heaven and earth. When viewed in the light of this generalisation, a hundred of the difficulties concerning it which before oppressed the critical intellect fall away.

Let us see how our law works in relation to Christianity. The Gospel is given us, first, in the history of Christ, and second, in that of His Church. In our ideas of both we get hopelessly astray if we forget our principle of spiritual amalgam. In Christ, to begin with, we have a revelation of the Absolute in the limited. In Him, as the Church all along has joyfully confessed, we see God. In that life

is the clearest revelation of the Divine vouchsafed to man. As Fichte has said, "Jesus of Nazareth is in a wholly peculiar manner, attributable to no one but Him, the only begotten and first-born Son of God."

But in its anxiety to affirm this side of the truth about Christ, theology in the past has been perpetually overlooking another. Not content with the facts as it found them, it has clumsily endeavoured to divinise Christ by a process of dehumanising Him. It has put Him out of historical relation, and clothed Him with a pseudo omnipotence and omniscience. A good specimen of its method here is the commentary of Ephrem Syrus on Christ's expressed ignorance of the future: "Christ, though He knew the moment of His second advent, yet, that they might not ask Him any more about it, said, 'I know it not.'" And even with prominent modern teachers it has been quite a favourite point to argue Christ's absolute and miraculous independence of the prepossessions and ideas of His generation. All this rests both on false history and false philosophy. As

to the history, any candid reader cannot help seeing that Jesus, so far from being independent of His time and people, was full of the spirit of both. His whole thought and language were coloured by the Messianic and apocalyptic Judaism in which He had been brought up. And a true philosophy shows us that unless a complete departure was to be made from the whole Divine education of humanity, this was the only thing that could happen. All God's revelations to man are through the human. If God was to come to man in a man, it must be at some one time and through some one race. The Divine Life must amalgamate itself with the conditions of that time and race. It must think through its thought, and drop its seed of eternity into the soil of its specific racial aspirations. And that is exactly what we have in the Christ of the New Testament. Completely a child of His time, He teaches in its thought forms, and reveals in its human conditions, a Truth and a Life that are beyond time.

This principle of spiritual amalgam has an equally signal illustration in the history of the



Church, and half the blunders of theology have come from the failure to recognise it. The Catholic idea that the Church in its creeds is in possession of a Divinely revealed, and therefore absolute, authoritative, and unchangeable presentation of Christian truths, could never have gained vogue had the law we are discussing been earlier understood. What we see in Church history is the Divine element of Christianity continually allying itself, as by a process of chemical attraction, with the different intellectual ideas of the varying races and ages through which its stream flowed. Thus in the first age Christian belief was Judaic and Messianic. The early believers had in them the same soul of the Gospel that we have, but the body which clothed it was a congeries of apocalyptic ideas which we could not enter into if we tried our hardest. Later we have this same essence encountering, on its intellectual side, the world of Greek philosophy, and forming a new amalgam, the result of which appears in the so-called Catholic creeds. It is one of the strangest things to find people looking to

these creeds as the very palladium of Christianity when, as a matter of fact, their form and a good deal of their substance is not Christian at all, but pagan. The terms used in them, their vocabulary of essence, substance, hypostasis, and so on have nothing to do with Galilee. They were forged in Greek workshops. They had Plato and Aristotle to their father and not Christ.

It would be easy to multiply these examples and to show how, from the beginning of the Gospel until now, the same process has been going on. In every successive age its Divine principle has been humbling itself to, and making what it could of, the human tenement prepared for it. And always, we may observe, the movement is towards a better body, towards a more adequate expression of itself. When one form has worn itself out it is cast off or remodelled. The sixteenth century saw the process on a great scale, but the Protestantism then created was far from a finality. The Bibliolatry on which, in its struggle with Roman Church authority, it fell back, and

which in the seventeenth century culminated in the monstrous doctrine of Quenstedt that every line, word, and syllable of the Scriptures was directly dictated by the Spirit, the writers being passive instruments, a doctrine which, it has been wittily said, makes Balaam's ass the fittest of all the chosen media of revelation, was a bodily form which the ever-growing spirit has already burst through and laid aside. Essential Christianity, which may be defined as the revelation of the true relation between man and God and man and man, with the power to create it, is again seeking new garments of thought, speech, and action. It is combining to-day with political economy and social science. Are we told that these are foreign to the Gospel? They are assuredly not more foreign than the philosophies which an Athanasius and an Augustine brought into the Church. And the amalgam they will produce will, we predict, be a good deal more Christian than the Athanasian Creed.

But this is only one side of the topic. What

we set out mainly to deal with, and which must now be left to a few concluding sentences, is its personal and individual aspect. The spiritual amalgams which take place in our own nature are as interesting as those seen on the broader scale of history. The first result of these processes is that there are as many Christianities as there are Christians. For with each man the seed drops into the special soil of his education, his temperament, capacity, and primitive instincts, and the result is always something unique and separate. There is in every one a twofold reaction—of Christianity upon his original character, and of his original character upon Christianity. In the endlessly varying thought-worlds thus produced Nature provides against the hide-bound stupidity which seeks, in the name of religion, to hammer all skulls into one shape. She allows men to repeat the same formularies, but takes care they none of them mean the same things.

So far we have spoken of spiritual amalgams entirely from one point of view. We have

studied the subject from above downwards. The thought throughout has been that of the Divine combining with what is inferior and human. But there is another and beautiful side of the topic which, in closing, we would fain leave in the minds of our readers. The action of the Christian spirit upon a nature that honestly receives it will work out in the endeavour, on its side, to link every function of the lower life with the higher and heavenly. The animal part of him will, under this influence, never be left to act alone. Eating and drinking are brought under spiritual law, made occasions for gracious courtesies, at times become lifted to the height of a sacrament. Sexual desire, which, left to itself, turns men into swine like Ulysses' companions, in this higher union is the source of endless chivalries. In a word, a man keeps to the height of his true self only by virtue of that spiritual amalgam which we term the soul's union with God.

### XXXIII.

## On Being Two-Faced.

THE term two-faced is heard not infrequently at tea-tables and other resorts where reputations are discussed. As ordinarily understood, it represents the reverse of a compliment. The verdict it carries, though not exactly in the same category with that of being a drunkard or a thief, is nevertheless one of the last which a self-respecting person would care to have pronounced against himself. The offence implied does not land a man in prison, but, if proved, it sends him often to the immediate neighbourhood of Coventry. And the general feeling is that the punishment is just. But what is it to be two-faced? The severity of the condemnation attached to the charge renders it the more important that it should never be brought unjustly. As a matter of fact there are few terms of social reprobation used more ignorantly or

more recklessly. The man who flings it at his neighbour does so, in many cases, simply because he has failed to understand a nature of wider compass than his own, or the exigency of circumstances of which he has no experience. Nowhere perhaps in that great region of the unwritten social code, whose judgments make so much of our happiness and our misery, is the need of discrimination greater or the average supply of it less.

It is, for instance, a by no means uncommon occurrence for a man to be called two-faced when, as a matter of fact, he has simply endeavoured to be polite. Is it our duty always to tell people exactly what we think of them? There are, it is true, some distinguished examples of doing so. Archbishop Sancroft, on a certain occasion, described his opponents as "d——d liars." Perhaps this interpretation of the line which his fellow nonjuring prelate Ken had just been writing in the morning hymn,

In all thy converse be sincere,

compelled him to this, no doubt, rigidly accurate



transcript of his feeling. But it certainly sounds odd from an Archbishop of Canterbury. There are abundant precedents, too, for roundly calling a man a fool when you think him one. Robert Hall, on being taxed by a young preacher with using the obnoxious expression about him, replied, "Did I say that? Well, sir, I thought it." And Swift, after a sojourn in Leicester, is reported as taking occasion, shortly after, to publicly express his opinion of the inhabitants as "a parcel of wretched fools." It is not given to everybody, however, to think aloud in this fashion, and it is quite as well for the peace of society that the general rule is the other way. But the man who would be ashamed to hurt the feelings of an intellectual or moral inferior by a wounding word has no business to be charged with insincerity if, afterwards, and when an occasion requires it, he gives his actual opinion. The charge will nevertheless very often be made. Where, in a case of this sort, it would really lie is when we offer compliments and profess attachments which we know are not real. There is an enormous amount of social

sinning of this kind which it behoves decent people to repent of and renounce. Our good opinion, if it is to be of value to others, should never be paid over till it has been earned. Uttered lavishly, and from the mere desire to please, it becomes of no worth to others, while it leaves the stain of untruth upon ourselves.

Men not infrequently come under the charge of being two-faced as the result simply of the richness and variety of their endowments. They are possessed of faculties which people of narrower range are unable to recognise as compatible with what they call "a consistent character." A man like the late Bishop Wilberforce, prodigally opulent of nature, having contact with life at a thousand points, and who would be discussing on the same day, with different individuals, and with a seemingly equal enthusiasm, sport, or art, or politics, or experimental religion, was certain in some circles to come under a charge of this sort. It was absurdly unjust. A man may be myriad-sided, yet perfectly sincere. With such, while the internal economy has a multitude of

departments, unity is preserved by a Head Office whose word is law in them all.

History furnishes us with characters, however, which, in this matter of singleness of mind or its reverse, are not quite so easy of decipherment. What, for instance, are we to say of a Benvenuto Cellini, expressing himself on one page of his journal in terms of religious ecstacy, and in another detailing with gusto the murder of an enemy, or the enjoyment of disgusting orgies? What of our own Sir John Hawkins, stealing slaves from Africa to carry for sale to the Spanish plantations, and saying of his escape from a storm while on this precious business, "but God did not suffer his elect to perish"? It would be wrong to call this insincerity in either the Catholic or the Puritan. Cellini is as whole-hearted in his religion as in his murders. The examples are not of two-facedness so much as of a condition of society in which the proper relation of ethics to religion was not recognised. Far removed as is such conduct from our own moral ideals it is, in relation to the point we are discuss-

ing, not in the same category with that of the French priests who, at the time of the Revolution, came forward and declared they had all along been professing a belief which they inwardly derided. Our Benvenuto was at worst an honest sort of scoundrel, and that is more than could be said of these Gallican renegades.

The mention of belief brings us to a side of our topic which we can do no more here than barely hint at—its relation to religious teaching and teachers. The man in the street is often in these days heard to object to the pulpit, that it does not say all it thinks. The parson, he avers, in matters of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, holds one language to the people and another to his intimates over a cigar after dinner. This, he says, is being two-faced. It may, or may not be. The Catholic doctrine of reserve in religious teaching appeals, up to a certain point, to common sense. No responsible teacher thinks it his duty to tell his pupils all he knows. Parents do not with their children. Christ held one language to the populace and another to the disciples. And these, too,

were told that He had many things to say which they could not at present bear. The religious teacher of to-day has to work by the same law. His function is not simply to proclaim facts but to help, as far as he can, a number of moral natures in various circumstances and stages of growth. His position makes him, in an important sense, a mediator between the old and the new. A large part of his work is to regulate and soften the impact of new and unaccustomed truths upon untrained minds; to canalise, as it were, the rush of fresh ideas and prevent them from becoming a destroying flood. The man who fails to recognise all this, who cannot see the proportion of things, who takes no pains to secure that the weaker members of the flock have always solid footing under their feet, is no true spiritual guide.

It has to be remembered, however, that this doctrine of reserve has its limits. The true teacher will rightly discuss the "how" and the "when" for stating what to some are new or unwelcome truths. But, when he has himself found these truths, he is bound to be loyal to

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them. To declare a doctrine which he believes to be false, or to permanently hide the one he holds to be true, is no business for an honest man. We may disagree entirely with the grounds which led Renan to renounce orthodox Christianity. But when he had reached personal conviction on this point he did the only thing possible to honour in giving up the priesthood. Luther's "Ich kann nicht anders" is the cry of every true soul at such crises. The impulse which comes upon such to declare, as by a Divine necessity, and in scorn of consequence, the things they see and feel to be true are the world's guarantee of progress from darkness to light.

## XXXIV.

### The Soul in Preaching.

IN the outside world the progress of civilisation has been largely a process of discovering sources of power which previously had lain concealed from human attention. Coiled one within another lie Nature's subtle forces, by successively tapping which man indefinitely extends his empire. He has supplemented muscular force by steam, and steam by electricity, and may be on the way to harnessing yet mightier energies to his car. The question arises whether there may not be anything analogous to this order of things in the life sphere of the Church; whether the Christian worker of every order, but the Christian preacher especially, may not find in the inner world of his own nature a similar series of powers, some nearer the surface others deeper down, the discovery and right use of which may



augment enormously the general output of his influence.

In such a study the outermost circle of energy is, of course, the physical, the intimate relation of which to spiritual result is even yet far from being fully appreciated. It is worth remembering that the most soul-moving utterance of a Whitefield or a Fenelon would have had its effects immediately annihilated by the introduction of a little carbonic acid gas to the room where they were speaking. Nature will, in fact, never permit us to overlook the connection of the physical with the psychical. Physical energy is not spiritual energy, any more than grass is beef; but there will not be one without the other. The point is vital both for those preparing for the pulpit and for those actually engaged in its work. The college authorities who do not secure a bodily as well as a mental training for their students, and the preachers who in their daily habits as to work, rest, exercise and sleep, deliberately break the laws of health, are openly sinning against the Church by putting in their own and in its way

a direct obstacle to the evolution of spiritual power.

Immediately beneath the physical comes the sphere of purely intellectual force, the importance of which as a pulpit equipment is now so universally recognised that it would be superfluous to dwell largely upon it. Suffice it to say that a very cursory examination of history reveals the fact that the men who have written their names most broadly on its page as religious powers—whether an Augustine in one age, a Luther in another, or a Wesley in a third—have been characters in whom a profound mystic apprehension of the spiritual world has been united with a disciplined brain, absorbent of the best learning of the time. St. Paul, the most intellectual of the Apostles, is the one whose influence survives. The people who quote his saying, “that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,” as an argument for unlearned enthusiasm in the pulpit, forget that the expression by one of the greatest minds of his own or any age of his own intellectual humility is one thing, and the easy

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self-confidence which elevates mental vacuity into a transcendental grace another and very different thing. In the Church as much as outside it knowledge is power, and, other things being equal, leadership will inevitably go to the pulpit which knows most and sees furthest.

Of these "other things" there remain, however, to be noted two of such vital importance that their absence makes even the most brilliant mental capacity of little avail. Of the concentric circles of force which we are describing these two stand still nearer to the centre. The first of them is the thing so difficult to define, but of potency so immense, which we call character. A good illustration of what we mean is afforded by Froude's remark about the relative influence of Whately and of John Henry Newman when they were contemporaries in the Oriel Common Room. Whately, he says, required to bring to their minds the clearest intellectual demonstration before he could lead them, whereas they were moved by anything Newman said from the mere fact that

it was he who said it. It is the possession of this precise power of producing a distinct moral and spiritual effect by the saying of things which, in the lips of another, would be without point or significance, that makes a true pulpit a force so entirely unique. The Abbé Vianney producing an indescribable emotion amongst a cultured audience by the simple words, "I want you, my dear children, to love God. He is so good," represents a problem in the sphere of influence which every preacher may well study. Power of this kind gathers about the utterances of men who are known to be of blameless character, of absolute honesty of speech and act, who dwell in the region of realities, who would sacrifice their dearest interests for the cause of truth, and who spare not themselves in the service of their God and of their fellow. A Church rich in such men might try a fall with any power on earth, and not be anxious about the result.

This last species of influence fades by an almost unrecognisable gradation into another, still more difficult to speak of, but which may

fairly claim to be the most central of all. We mean that arising from the Christian preacher's direct relation to the spiritual world. The apostolic terminology furnishes us with its precise description when it speaks of a preaching "in demonstration of the spirit and of power." There has been an enormous amount of mystical writing and speaking on the question of how to secure this suggested reinforcement of one's own faculty by a power coming to it from without. Men have worked themselves into a frenzy of excitement to obtain what they call "a baptism of the spirit." There is surely room for some clearer thinking on this subject. In the scientific world men do not talk of getting by a merely emotional process such a thing as, say, "a baptism of electricity." If they want to clothe themselves with any force outside themselves, they do so by first studying the laws of that force, obeying them, and organically relating themselves to them. And in this way and in no other will men, in the sphere of religious work and testimony, secure that mighty augmentation of power which the

New Testament speaks of as coming directly from the spiritual sphere. It will simply be by studying and obeying the laws of that spiritual realm, and by organically relating oneself to them. Men live and work at present largely in the outer circles of power, obtaining results which accord with this position. In proportion as—by purer living and higher thinking, and by a more exact obedience to what of truth and right they know—they come into closer relation with the innermost spheres will their power upon both Church and world augment by leaps and bounds.

## The Soul's Holidays.

THE annual summer holiday may be said to have definitely established itself as an integral part of modern life. To leave one's ordinary pursuits and one's ordinary haunts for a certain number of weeks in August or September has, with a vast mass of the toiling community, become as fixed a habit as that of breakfasting or of wearing clothes. With these classes the year has two great divisions : the eleven months more or less of "the daily grind," and the much-cherished remaining fraction devoted to seaside, moor, or mountain. The arrangement, on the whole, works fairly well, and answers in a rough and ready fashion to a felt physical and mental need. We are most of us in harness. It may be all very well for a Thoreau to recommend us to "as long as possible live uncommitted; it makes little difference whether you



are committed to a farm or a county gaol." Unfortunately, we are not all Concord philosophers, and the mass of us find the being "committed to a farm," or its equivalent, the only apparent means of escaping the other, and to most of us distinctly less desirable, alternative. But the annual break from the harness finds us quite ready for it when it comes, and the year's total output of activity is, in the vast majority of cases, the better, in respect both of quantity and quality, for that brief release.

It is, however, worth while to point out that holidays may very easily be overrated in their relation either to the enjoyment or the general furtherance of life. It would indeed be a pessimistic view which should regard the main body of the year's experiences as a dull, unrelieved mass, through which the thin streak of vacation time shone as the only line of light. Nature, happily, has taken care that we shall not fall into that mistake. In her constitution, both of the human mind and of external circumstance, she has provided a holiday system of her own, which, while it takes the conven-

tional one into account, is by no means dependent on it. The soul has its holidays, and the times of them have no necessary relation to August or September.

The foremost association of a holiday is that of pleasure. But what, in the final analysis, is pleasure? Plato saw in pleasure an escape from pain, the satisfaction of a want, the want itself being pain. Aristotle regards pleasure as the concomitant or expression of perfect energy, and Kant comes very near to this in defining it as the feeling of the furtherance of life. Whatever view of the matter we may take, one result of the analysis will be the discovery that the moments of our soul's keenest satisfaction, its highest sense of "*la joie de vivre*" belong to its periods of toil, its times of stress and strain, rather than to those of careless ease. It is in the putting forth of its whole self that consciousness satisfies its own deepest want. We feel most free when we are most alive, and we are most alive in the positions which call our every faculty into play. Every healthy nature knows this,

and consents to rest only that it may toil the more.

When we come from principles to the actual experience of life, it is an exhilarating study to note the gloriously free way in which the soul takes its holidays. It scorns conventions and attires itself for highest festivities under circumstances which set the calculations of Humdrum at defiance. One of the last places in the world to be regarded as a holiday resort was surely the noisome den at Bedford in which Bunyan was confined. But there was rarest holiday-making within. Not in king's palace, nor amid the noblest scenery of our isles, was there such exaltation of soul, such vision of beauty, such sense of life and freedom as filled the soul of the lonely prisoner as there rose before him in his dungeon the successive scenes of that great conception which was to make him immortal. To stand on the Delectable Mountains was better than to climb the Jungfrau. Greatheart, Christian and Faithful formed finer society than the wits of the coffee-houses. To have looked through the gates of

the New Jerusalem made cheap the splendours of Paris or Rome.

It is doubtful whether in the present day we have anybody who could take holiday in prison in such a fashion as that. The vision faculty is being crushed out under the pressure of materialism. We feel the bitter earnest of Hazlitt's jest: "In the days of Jacob there was a ladder between heaven and earth, but now the heavens have gone further off and are become astronomical." Spite, however, of changed conceptions of the universe and their reaction on theology, it remains that for the soul the surest way to freedom and to holiday exultance is through religion. We have become doubtful of many things, but it is not a matter of doubt that faith and love can create a paradise. It is not legend, but sober history, which Lecky is giving us when he says: "There has probably never existed upon earth a community whose members were bound to one another by a deeper or purer affection than the Christians in the days of the persecution." Persecution was no more intrinsically pleasant in those days

than now, but amid that circle of hunted people there was, we may depend upon it, more pleasure than is found in grouse shooting. They had found the secret of loving, and where love is, the soul ever makes holiday. To this even the sceptical and sad-hearted Amiel bears witness when he says: "Celui qui ne demande à la vie que l'amélioration de son être, que le perfectionnement moral dans le sens du contentement intérieur et de la soumission religieuse, est moins exposé que personne à manquer la vie."

It would be easy to multiply examples of the way in which Nature gives holiday times to the soul under the strangest outward conditions. Thackeray is exactly true to life when, in "Esmond," he sketches a poor merchant trembling on the edge of bankruptcy who has sleepless nights, in which he thinks of suicide, but who, when the crash has come and he has lost all, finds he can now sleep comfortably. After desperate strivings to keep his foothold, he has finally slipped and rolled to the bottom, to find that it is not such a bad place after all.

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The experience is typical and should be encouraging. When we come back from vacation time to resume the familiar task awaiting us, it is refreshing to think that in the midst of the most pressing urgencies and of circumstances the least promising to which it may introduce us, there are reserved for us there holiday seasons which the soul will register as the best of all.

## XXXVI.

### When the Soul Lets Go.

THE process of letting-go is sometimes a hazardous one, calling for all the nerve and judgment there may be on hand. To commit oneself to a glissade in the High Alps without being quite sure what is at the farther end, or to drop from the end of a rope slung over a vessel's side to a boat riding below on a high-running sea, with the consciousness that if you miss the elect moment the said boat will be yards away, and you amongst the fishes, are experiences in this line which, when gone through for the first time, leave a mark in the memory. People who have lived, in any wide sense of the word, are sure sooner or later to come upon dead drops of faith of this kind. Moments arrive when we have to leave the known for the



unknown, to commit ourselves to an untried principle, to make our fate depend upon the action of a law which we have hitherto taken on hearsay.

Letting-go is a business both of the exterior and the interior of life, and in both forms an essential feature of human progress. History is made by the men who accomplish it successfully. When the world is ready for a fresh departure, its struggling consciousness becomes incarnate in some one individual, who drops away from the old moorings, carrying its fortunes in his hands. The act, whenever and on whatever scale accomplished, offers a psychological moment which one would like to know more about. It is a pity the men who perform it have been, many of them, so reticent. The pioneer who first trusted himself to the sea and the man who swallowed the first oyster would have made splendid "copy" if only they had thought of getting themselves interviewed. M. Andrée, if he comes back in his balloon from the Pole, will, no doubt, be

sufficiently talked about, but the man who really "let-go" in that region of things is forgotten. Not one in a thousand remembers the name of Pilatre des Rosiers. Yet when this man seated himself in the newly-invented Montgolfier and, first of mortals to make the venture, rose from the solid earth to the immeasurable spaces of the upper air, he opened a fresh chapter in the history of the race. In him, man was taking possession of a new kingdom, destined some day to be as familiar to him as to the birds.

Letting-go is a process which people undergo quite apart, often, from their own choice. It is one to which, for their good, Nature is perpetually compelling her unwilling children. We have known a youth take his first header under a threat, on refusal, of being pitched neck and crop into the stream by his companions. The experience could hardly be called agreeable, but it made him a swimmer. On the broader scale this is continually happening. The Unseen Power behind history

forces man time and again to the edge of the solid ground, compelling him to the leap which threatens destruction, and which he takes cursing his fate. He is astonished afterwards to find how he has fallen on his feet. Wholly harsh and unrelenting seemed the pressure of circumstance which, in 1620, pushed the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower* into that uncomfortable bark and to that most bodeful voyage. Could they have seen the issues their hearts had been lighter.

To let-go successfully requires some conditions. The time must be ripe, and the principle to which we commit ourselves trustworthy. Birds fly, but a young one who struggles out of the nest too soon will fall and get killed. A man may let-go only to be smashed into bits at the precipice bottom. When we are not sure of our parachute it is much better to stop in the balloon. In the region of social and spiritual, as well as of material experiments, the way is marked by lettings-go which were catastrophes, as well as by those which were successes. The gains

come when men strike upon some new law, the defeats when they try to ignore or to get rid of an old one. Thoreau's attempt to desocialise himself was brave, and the record of his experiences makes delightful reading. But in the name of being natural it was really an attack on nature, and we know the result. The rebel who had rhapsodised on independence ended by quietly coming back to his fellows. Fourier's phalanstery system, built on the opposite theory, that one could so combine the play of the unrestricted human passions as to produce a happy and progressive society, was equally a kicking against some ascertained moral and spiritual laws, and paid the penalty of all such recalcitrance.

It is in the sphere of the inner and spiritual life that the principle of letting-go receives some of its most momentous applications. As in other departments, so here we find the human story one first of crawling on all fours, then of endeavours after the upright position, assisted by clutches at whatever offers itself as a support, until at last the

pupil stands and walks alone. In no other direction, however, is there such a tendency to reversion. Nowhere so much as here do men, after learning the use of their feet, so easily get frightened back into the crawling posture. Centuries before the Christian era it was given to an inspired Jew to tell his contemporaries what Matthew Arnold retold to our ears, that true religion is essentially conduct. But Micah's magnificent deliverance, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," represented a stage in the use, in religion, of one's own limbs, which his countrymen at large were long leagues away from. Christ found the Jewish nation in His day still going on crutches, and the habit, spite of His own life and teaching, in the religious world yet remains the fashion. A Paul may, with his doctrine of faith, knock away the loved implements from under Galatian armpits, but as soon as his back is turned the old hobbling recommences.

To-day, over three-fourths of Christendom,

the religion which saves is held to consist primarily in submission to Church authority and the acceptance of old-world creeds. The crutch ecclesiastical is still *de rigueur*. To walk without it is considered as socially indecent. The *nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri* habit is shocking impertinence. Spite, however, of clerical reactions and all other appearances to the contrary, men will in the end get to their feet in these matters, and the crutch be finally relegated to the museum of antiquities. The religion which consists simply in heart-whole loyalty to truth and to the highest standard of living is already in sight. The time will come when it is in full possession.

## XXXVII.

### The Soul and Death.

DEATH is at once the most familiar and the most unfamiliar of human facts. We are all agreed that we must die, but the world has been quarrelling from the very beginning as to what dying really means. Whole races who have lived and passed away in the belief that death meant extinction have had for next-door neighbours peoples entirely filled with the thought of an existence beyond. Warburton's "Divine Legation" was based on the supposition that the Israelites under Moses had no idea of a future life. But long before the Exodus, some six thousand years ago in fact, their neighbours the Egyptians, as their "Book of the Dead" testifies, were basing their whole theory of life on the conception of a world to come. In the near East we listen to an Omar Kháyyam expressing in



exquisite but infinitely mournful strains his creed that the destiny of a man is to taste one draught of life's waters on the way to annihilation, and that

One thing is certain and the rest is lies,  
The flower that once is blown for ever dies;

while further East and furthur back in time the Indian Bhagavad Gita is replying thus to the doctrine of extinction :

These bodies that enclose the everlasting soul  
    inscrutable  
Immortal, have an end; but he who thinks the soul  
    can be destroyed,  
And he who deems it a destroyer, are alike mistaken; it  
Kills not and is not killed; it is not born nor doth  
    it ever die.

Interesting, however, and, in a way, important as are these past ideas, our chief concern here is with the opinion of to-day, and, above all, with the grounds of it. The views on this subject of a not inconsiderable portion of modern society are, it must be said, frankly negative. Numbers of cultivated men in both

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hemispheres hold, in their secret mind, that this life is all, or at least that the odds are enormously against there being any other. It is easy to see how this has come about. The decline in authority of the traditional theology has left the mind open to the tremendous assault of the senses, and the average man sees nothing to rebut it. The evidence of appearances looks so entirely unanswerable. The mind, we see, grows with the growth of the body, matures as the body matures, decays as the body decays; why should we not, then, say it dies when the body dies? Life gives us overwhelming evidence of the dependence of each of the two partners on the other. An injury to the brain will produce an entire change in the mental and moral life of the subject of it. What, then, more reasonable than to suppose that if the brain is not merely injured, but destroyed, the inner consciousness will be destroyed also? The extent to which men have succumbed to this argument is patent in the whole literature of modern Europe. A typical illustration of the tone it has produced,

more, perhaps, on the Continent than here, is in the finish of one of Pierre Loti's stories, in which he describes the end of his hero, a French soldier in Algeria. Cut off from his comrades, he is surrounded by Arabs, who thrust their spears into him, and leave him to die alone. With a minute and terrible realism we have described for us the soldier's every successive sensation on his way to death. There come to him pictures of home, memories of old friends, frenzies of thirst and fever, a roaring in the ears, flashings and whirlings in the eyes of light and colour, and then for end—a body left to be gnawed by vultures, and a naked skull rolled over and over by the winds of the desert.

There are, with most of us, moods when a presentation of this kind, taken with our own observations in the spheres of disease and of mortality, have an almost overwhelming effect. This particular mood has, indeed, lain heavily upon Europe during more than a generation. But there are signs that it is passing away. And the curious thing is that the cure is

coming from the very quarter out of which came the disease. For it is the science, the material observation, which appeared at first to rivet on man the chains of death, that is now forging the instruments of his deliverance. First of all, it has shown us the fallacy of appearances. The premises on which the old materialistic arguments were based are being shattered by more extended observation. Matter, the partner of spirit, is showing in such entirely new lights as to make us recast all our conceptions about it. Whatever death does to spirit it does not destroy matter. It changes it, that is all. And if all death can do to one, and the inferior partner in the human compact, is to alter its form, what natural or logical ground, men are beginning to ask, is there for supposing that it can do more with its associate, the spirit? As to the argument arising from the deterioration of mental powers consequent on physical decay, that need frighten us no more than it frightened Socrates. It amounts only to this, that the mind as player is hampered by a worn-out

instrument. To say that a Beethoven cannot extract perfect music from a used-up piano is surely not to prove that our Beethoven will never get another piano. On this whole side of the question it is certainly not going too far to say that modern science, in demonstrating the continuity of force, has made it more difficult than ever to believe that the highest kind of force as yet manifested on this planet, namely, that of the human spirit, should be the one exception to the law. If we can turn heat into motion, and motion into electricity, and electricity into light, but can by no process reduce them to nothingness, what is there in the nature of things, or in human experience, to lead us to the conclusion that character or soul-force will meet with a worse fate? The broad hint of science here is that, like its mate the body, the spirit may be transmuted but will not be destroyed.

It is at first startling, but afterwards infinitely reassuring, to learn that in the scheme of evolution death is not a necessity, but simply one of Nature's devices for the furtherance of

life. The investigations of a Maupas and a Weismann yield as a result that the lowest organisms are practically immortal. It was in the endeavour after a higher and more complicated structure that death entered. What is more, in his study of the germ-plasm, which, as distinguished from the cells which are perishable, persists and is potentially immortal, Weismann maintains that under favourable conditions it seems capable of surrounding itself with a new body. We are only at the beginning of these studies, but the perspective they open is immense. They show us life, instead of being lorded over by death, pressing it into its service to help build up its structures and complete its developments. Instead of being the dread tyrant before which all must bow, death is shown to be life's day labourer, whose entrance on the scene can be discerned, and whose departure, when his work is done, may be predicted.

It may be said that what science here offers does not, after all, amount to much. It would

not if it stood alone. But it comes as reinforcement to an immense and growing body of considerations arising from another source. Man's strongest hope for immortality rests, after all, upon his moral and spiritual intuitions, and upon his moral and spiritual history. He dwells in a visible universe which he can prove has come out of an unseen one, to which it will eventually return. He has already multiform relations with that Unseen, and is continually enlarging them. The highest thinkers everywhere recognise the spirit world as the most real and the most mighty. Spirit everywhere pervades matter and everywhere rules it. And this permanent force, amid a world of change, man realises as abiding not only in the Universe on which he looks, but in his own deepest self. The Eternal within him claims kinship with the Eternal without him. His desires here are facts in the making. His yearning for immortality is the unborn in him groping for the light to which it is destined; it is the inland stream calling, as it runs, to the ocean whence it came and towards which it hastes.



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It may be that man, this side death, will never reach its ultimate secret, or gain physical demonstration of what is beyond. In this very lack, this withholding, of what he thirsts for may, however, lie the very demonstration itself, though its appeal be to another sense. For the message of the New Testament, which, when all is said, remains the highest authority on this subject, is that man's preparation for his spiritual inheritance is to be, right through, by the education of faith. That the landscape is darkened around him, his prospect barred by impenetrable veils, his straining ear met by the appalling silence, may have this for the reason—that in no other way than by “believing where we cannot prove” could the soul gain that special development which is needed for its highest energy and for its full preparation for the realm beyond.

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